

Guru Nanak Ideals and Institutions

Editors

*H.S. Soch
&
Madanjit Kaur*



**Guru Nanak Dev University
Amritsar**

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Guru Nanak : Ideals & Institutions

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Dedicated

to

The Tricentenary Celebrations of the Khalsa

ਤੇਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੰਜੀਠੜਾ
ਰਤਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਚੋਲਾ ਸਦ ਰੰਗ ਢੋਲਾ ॥

Thy Name alone is the madder,
with which the cloak of my body is dyed.
My Loved Lord,
This colour is everlasting.

-Suhi Mahla I, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 729.

PREFACE

It is an acknowledged fact of history of human civilisation that Guru Nanak had revolutionised the concept of religion in the world by introducing humanitarian and universal teachings in quest of the Ultimate Reality and the welfare of human beings. The present volume--*Guru Nanak: Ideals and Institutions* attempts to present unique aspects of Guru Nanak's teachings with a view to focusing attention on the global consciousness of Sikhism and its futuristic concerns in the 21st century for the welfare of humanity. The book is duly documented with evidence from *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. The subject matter of this volume is an original work of collective efforts and presents valuable information on the ideals and institutions introduced by Guru Nanak, founder of the most pragmatic and scientific religion of the world.

We hope, the book will meet expectations of the scholars and will be received with enthusiasm by the readers, Sikh community and seekers of Truth all over the globe.

We are thankful to Mr. Jagjit Singh Walia, Director, Press and Publications, Guru Nanak Dev University and his colleagues for their keen interest and full involvement in the printing of this book. We are thankful to Raghubir Singh Tak, Reader, Deptt. Guru Nanak Studies and Dr. Balwant Singh Dhillon, Senior Lecturer, Deptt. of Guru Nanak Studies for their help in the proof reading of this book. Our thanks are due to Dr. Gursharan Jit Singh, Lecturer, Deptt. Guru Nanak Studies for preparing the Index of this Volume.

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Editors

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ESSENTIALS OF GURU NANAK'S TEACHINGS

H.S. Soch

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) introduced a distinct religious philosophy which differs from the fundamentals of the World Religions. Most of the Oriental and Sematic religions are based on faith. It is an accepted fact in the study of comparative Religions that if religion is based on only faith there can be no scope for interfaith dialogues. Guru Nanak's religion is based on spiritual experience.¹ It has a global vision and universal potentialities. The religion of Guru Nanak can freely enter into inter-faith dialogues with any religion which is based on monotheism, humanism and universal spiritualism.²

Guru Nanak was not a type of mystic, absorbed in the love of God, seeking personal salvation but he was deeply concerned with evils of his times and the fate of human existence in the complexity of orthodox social and religious infrastructure of the society as well as corruption which had effaced morality and had effected the stability of the social order. Guru Nanak saw living spirit and spiritual element dried up into dogmatism, whether of mechanical worship or meritorious readings or rule of justice. Guru Nanak struck vigorously at the root cause of the superstition and moral decline by demanding Truth in faith and spirit of commitment in worship. He categorically rejected polytheism and every idea that encumbered the relation between God and man and preached for direct relation of man with God. He rejected penance and preached purity, justice and goodness. He held out no promises in the next world but the meeting of the Loved One Himself

here and now in this very world. The ideal of life, the measure of salvation, he taught is not acquisition of worldly happiness but to serve God and his creatures; and to be with God. There are various dimensions, in which Guru Nanak brought true knowledge to bear upon the problems of life.

The Guru separated religion from the complexity of metaphysics and ritualism. He preached his message in the language of the masses through the devotional string of music (*ragas*³ and *kirtan*⁴) and made it possible for the common man to understand the meaning of the Holy Word at personal level and collectively in the congregation (*sadh sangat*).⁵ Through the process of socialization of the spiritual training, Guru Nanak aimed to establish the kingdom of God on earth through human efforts.

The motto of life in the religious system of Guru Nanak is to live in the Will of God (*Hukam*)⁶ and under the guidance of the *Guru*⁷ (*sabad*)⁸ to endeavour to establish unity with the cosmos through *Nam* and loving devotion,^{8a} earning by hard labour (*Kirat Kamai*)⁹, service (*Sewa*)¹⁰ and sharing (*Wand Chhakna*)¹¹ with fellow beings.¹²

Guru Nanak *bani* (devotional compositions) enshrined in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* gives us an over all view of his teachings. The present study attempts to present an overall view of the essentials of Guru Nanak's teachings. The hypothesis and formulations of this study are supported by evidence from the Divine words of the founder of Sikhism--Guru Nanak.

There are various hymns of Guru Nanak which specifically stress the excellency of the spiritual experience and exhort man to use their faculties (all God's gifts) in making their religion a medium of spiritual progress and thereby transcend from faith to higher spiritual religion:

Says Nanak this is the True path,
all else is of the devil's way.¹³

Only one way for all

Guru Nanak authoritatively pronounced that there is only one true religion, it is practising Truth and it is for everlasting.¹⁴ This idea of Guru Nanak has been explicitly described by the third Guru, Amar Dass as following:

There is only one religion,
 let every body practice truth.
 In every age perfection is attained by
 this teaching of the Guru,
 that God-oriented man will find the
 unknowable and Infinite,
 who fixes his attention on the
 everlasting word like a continuous flow.¹⁵

According to Guru Nanak God is Truth (*Sat/SatNam*)¹⁶, therefore truthful living can make us God-like and God oriented. The Guru specifically emphasised on Truthful conduct of the man. He asserts that Truth is Higher in the spiritual realm but higher than Truth is the Truthful living.¹⁷ Guru Nanak laid emphasis in adopting true *dharma* (righteousness).¹⁸ In the contemporary religious context of Guru Nanak, religion had become a watertight compartment with the Hindus, who believed that there were different *Dharmas* (religious righteousness) for the four different *Varnas* into which Hindu society was segregated. All outsiders and other religious traditions were considered as untouchables by the *Manu Smriti*. The same spirit of bias and prejudice permeated within the Muslim society who dubbed Hindus as infidels and believed that whosoever does not put his faith in the Prophet Mohammad will go to hell. Guru Nanak rejected attitude of both the Hindus and the Muslims and preached that in reality there is only one religion, one who passes aspersion on this truth is bound to be condemned.¹⁹

Guru Nanak does not divide humanity on the basis of their creeds, caste, colour, race, gender, or nationality. For him, True religion is for

all without any discrimination or barrier and it has no geographical limitation. For the Guru, man is not bad by nature, neither he is born out of a sin.

According to Guru Nanak *haumai* (ego, pride, self-centredness, evil impulses etc.) is the problem of man. Under the influence of *haumai* one transmigrates and wanders in doubt and fails to perceive the true nature of salvation.²⁰ Realisation of God's Will (*hukam*) is the solution to the fate of unregenerated man suffering from *haumai*. If this path of untruth be removed, one can regain the position of *Sachiar*.²¹ This is how Guru Nanak views man's predicament.

Guru has given only two categories of men i.e. *Gurmukh* (God oriented) and *Manmukh* (self-centred).²² The *Gurmukhs* have realised their real goal of life and have turned their face towards God. They practise Truth and do virtuous deeds.²³ *Gurmukh* controls his ego (*haumai*), leads a disciplined life and serves God and His creatures. *Gurmukh* is attuned to God's will (*Hukam*) and works for the welfare of the whole mankind. He is absorbed in *Nam Simran* and lives in the company of *sadh sangat*. With the Grace (*Nadar/Mehar*) of Lord, the *Gurmukh* is emancipated and helps others to tread the path of God,²⁴ while the *Manmukh* is a ego-centric person. He lives in *haumai* and follows the whims of his own mind and practises deceit, falsehood, injustice and selfishness. Whatsoever caste, creed, gender, status or station a man may belong to, he has to tread the path of *Gurmukh* if he wants to attain the goal of life (salvation) on this earth and liberation from suffering of mundane life.

The spiritual discipline is equally to be applied on Hindus and Muslims and others. Only then one can claim to be a real holy person. Guru Nanak says:

He is a yogi who knows the way,
and recognise the One only, through Guru's grace.
He is a *qazi* who turns his mind inwards and

die to self in this life through the Grace of the Guru.
 He who reflects on Brahman is a Brahmin.
 He saves himself and several generations of his.²⁵

The second Master, Guru Angad reminded the Hindus of futility of their different practices regarding the existence of One *Dharma* and stressed on the unity of religion as shown by Guru Nanak. The Guru says:

The way of Yogis is the way of philosophy,
 and that of Brahmins to read the *Vedas*;
 The way of Kshatriyas is the way of bravery,
 and that of Sudras is to serve others;
 But to one who understands matter,
 there is one and the same way for all.²⁶

What is that way? Guru pronounced:

Religion does not consist in mere words;
 He who looks on all men as equals is religious.
 Religion does not consist in wandering to tombs
 or places of cremation,
 or sitting in different postures of contemplation.
 Religion does not consist in wandering from country to
 country, or in bathing at sacred places;
 Abide pure amid the impurities of the world;
 thus shall thou find the path of religion.²⁷

The idea of purity is amply described by Guru Nanak. By remembering God alone, heart becomes pure. Guru Nanak says:

When a hand, a foot, the body, or a part of it is soiled;
 the dirt is removed by washing it with water,
 When clothes are made impure by urine,
 they are made clean by washing them with soap.
 So when the understanding is defiled by sin,

it is washed by love of the Name.²⁸

Again Guru Nanak stresses:

Making my mind a stone,
I shall rub the sandalwood of the Name on it.
By mixing it with saffron of good deeds,
I shall worship thee in my heart.
Worship Him by meditating on the Name.
Without it there is no worship,
No use bathing the Gods outside thee,
Wash thy own mind,
By cleaning the soul of all dirt thou shalt
find the way to salvation.²⁹

Guru Nanak says, he who purifies his heart is a wise man.³⁰ He who destroys all impurity is a true man of faith.³¹ To be called a true man of God is to make the heart clean of all sins. Guru Nanak expounds:

The heart gets impure with greed, and the
tongue with lying;
The eyes get impure by staring at another's wealth,
wife or her beauty;
The ears get impure by devouring the slander of others.
Nanak, these impurities make the soul of man bound to hell.
All other impurities supposed to be contracted from
touch to superstitions.
Birth and death are ordained,
We come and go by His Will.
All eating and drinking, which God has given as
sustenance is pure.
Nanak, those who have realised this through
the Guru do not believe in that impurity.^{31a}

Guru Nanak preached that religion is a matter of the inner realisation. Mere outer purity is of no avail. He says:

They are not to be called pure who only wash their bodies.
Rather they are pure, Nanak,
Who enshrine. Lord in their hearts.³²

Guru Nanak says mere observance of penance and visiting places of pilgrimage, or worshipping idols and dwelling in forests and living in renunciation is not the way to purify one's mind.³³ Mere assuming of signs, symbols and forms of a particular creed or donning of robes of a particular order, sect, denomination is of no avail. None will enter paradise without good deeds.³⁴ All will have to render account at His door. Without righteous deeds none shall get honour at His court and attain liberation.³⁵ Only:

He who can realise the True One, Shall obtain honour.³⁶
....
He who talks of Truth,
From him, Nanak no question will be asked
hereafter.³⁷

According to Guru Nanak's teachings, a man's religion is known from the deeds that he performs.³⁸ The performance of rites and rituals does not lead to righteous deeds and will not take a man far on the path of spiritual progress. Whatever a man sows, he will reap. Without acquiring merit life is wasted. The real problem is to clean the mind and heart of evil propensities. If that is not accomplished, all austerities are useless exercises.³⁹

Guru Nanak denounced renunciation, asceticism and life of recluse. Activity is the keynote of Guru Nanak's teachings. He prescribed householder's life.⁴⁰ Guru Nanak propounded for attitude of detachment while leading the worldly life. The Guru says:

As a Lotus flower remains unaffected in water,

as also a duck which floats carefree on the stream
 and becomes not wet.
 So with fixed intent on the Guru's word
 and uttering the Lord's Name,
 O Nanak, the dreadful Sea of Existence is crossed.
 He who liveth detached,
 Enshrining the One Lord in his mind,
 living without desire in the midst of desires
 and sees and shows to others the Inaccessible
 and Incomprehensible Lord; of him Nanak is a slave.⁴¹

In the religion of Guru Nanak the basis of spiritual life is ethical conduct. Ethics is the basis of his spiritual edifice. For spiritual disciple, the code of conduct is a necessity. Unless virtues are imbibed the seeker can not tread on the spiritual plane. Guru Nanak believed in pure devotion, only pure in heart will find God.

According to Guru Nanak:

Truth can be contained only in a pure vessel (heart)
 but few adopt pure conduct.
 The string of my heart now vibrates in union
 with the supreme chord (Supreme Reality),
 Nanak has sought refuge with Thee.⁴²

Guru Nanak propagates:

Shun vice and run after virtues,
 those who commit sins will have to repent.
 Those who cannot distinguish between right and
 wrong occasion sink in mud of sins again and again.
 With dirt of greed inside and much falsity in speech,
 Why are you washing your body from outside?
 Through the Guru ever repeat the Pure Name,
 Then alone will your pride become pure.
 Shun greed, give up calumny and falsehood,

then you will be rewarded through the Guru's teachings.
 Keep me in the way that pleases thee,
 O God! Thy servant Nanak will glorify thee through the
 Word.⁴³

Guru Nanak laid down guidelines for a positive and simple path for Union with Divinity. The Guru's doctrine of emancipation is not negative. It does not recommend withdrawal of self from worldly life. It is life affirmative. The Guru asserts that it is convenient for a man to lead a normal life, enjoy the usual comforts of family and obtain salvation. But the Guru emphasised the spirit of self-less service and an attitude of non-attachment for spiritual elevation. Guru Nanak says:

When man remains detached amidst
 worldly attachments, he attains
 the way of yoga (spiritual perfection).⁴⁴

Guru Nanak proposed salvation for man -- here in this world and called it *Jiwan mukta* (liberated while alive). The Guru explains the process of attaining this state of spiritual progress as following:

Reflecting on the Name, man's mind is accustomed
 to serve others;
 Stilling the ego is tantamount to worship,
 penance and austerity.
 When man hears the Lord's name within,
 he gets emancipated while alive.
 through such a way of life, he is blessed with eternal peace.⁴⁵

Guru Nanak has given five stages (*Khands*) of the spiritual journey which has been described in his 'Japuji' (*pauris* 34 to 37) as following:

(i) Dharam Khand

This is the realm of man's duties required by one's status in life.

It is the realm of righteousness, where man's worth depends upon his virtuous deeds and moral actions.⁴⁶

(ii) Gian Khand

This is the realm of the knowledge where man knows the manifold phenomenon of God's creation in all its rich variety.⁴⁷

(iii) Saram Khand

This is the realm of self-realisation where man has to view the cosmos and to awaken his mind to reflect on the knowledge received. It points to transformed human consciousness. However, the devotee must all along pray for God's Grace because without God's benevolence man cannot attain the goal by himself alone.⁴⁸

(iv) Karam Khand

This is the realm of Grace and depicts the spiritual firmness and poise of devotee who has attained mystic experience. Man is blessed by the Divine Light. He gets tremendous strength to perform great deeds. He is blessed with eternal happiness and inspires others towards spiritual progress.⁴⁹

(v) Sach Khand

This is the realm of Truth. It is the final stage of spiritual progress. *Sach Khand* is the goal, the ultimate end and purpose of human existence. It is the destination of man's spiritual journey.⁵⁰

Guru Nanak wanted common men to lead a real spiritual life and combine themselves in a social pattern which will give rise to toleration, harmony and altruistic attitude to work for the welfare of the whole mankind (*Nanak nam chardi kala tere bhane sarbat da bhala*).

Notes and References

1. ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ ਰਾਹੁ ਏਹੁ

ਹੋਰਿ ਗਲਾ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ॥

(Nanak this is the True Path,
all else is of the devil's way).

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1245.

2. See Madanjit Kaur, *Guru Nanak And His Teachings*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1989, pp.1-31.
3. The hymns in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* are not arranged according to the composers but according to the *Ragas* or modes to which they are meant to be sung. There are 31 *Ragas* used in the arrangement of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. There is a close relationship between the *rasa* of the *raga* used for the hymns. Guru Nanak has composed his *bani* in 19 *Ragas*.
4. The singing of hymns in praise of God in prescribed *Ragas* by a group of devotees usually to the accompaniment of musical instruments. According to *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, *Kirtan* sung devotionally cleans the mind of impurities and leads one to spiritual elevation and emancipation (pp.297 and 747).
5. Literally *Sadh Sangat* means holy company. The concept of *Sadh Sangat* is pivotal to the spiritual growth of a Sikh (disciple). It implies association with virtuous and holy persons. Guru Nanak has defined *Sadh Sangat* as following:

ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਕੈਸੀ ਜਾਣੀਐ॥

ਜਿਥੈ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੀਐ॥

(The holy congregation is an assembly, where nothing but the Name of Lord is recited).

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p 72.

Guru Nanak also explains the vital role of the *Sadh Sangat*. The Guru says in the company of the worthy, the individual finds inspiration and learns the way of true living. Guru Nanak affirms:

ਉਤਮ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਉਤਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ॥

ਗੁਣ ਕਉ ਧਾਵੈ ਅਵਗਣੁ ਧੋਵੈ॥

(In the company of the pious, one becomes worthy, having cleaned himself of blemishes, he hastens to achieve spiritual excellence).

Ibid., p. 414.

According to Guru Nanak in the congregation of the holy, one obtains the Holy Name and gets enlightened with the Grace of God:

ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਥਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਘਟਿ ਚਾਨਣਾ ਆਨ੍ਹੇਰੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ॥
ਲੋਹਾ ਪਾਰਸਿ ਭੇਟੀਐ ਕੰਚਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਆਇਆ॥

Ibid., p. 1244.

Also see Guru Arjan Dev's hymn:

ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਤ ਸਭਾ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਜੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਕੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਨਿਵਾਸੁ॥
ਮਿਟੈ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਅਗਿਆਨਤਾ ਭਾਈ ਕਮਲ ਹੋਵੈ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ॥

Ibid., p. 639.

6. *Hukam* literally means order or command. In Guru Nanak's teachings *Hukam* stands for Divine Order or God's Will. *Hukam* is the basis of organisation and maintenance of the entire cosmos. Guru Nanak's instruction to the man is to accept the divine will without any grumbling because there is nothing beyond the *Hukam*. It pervades over everything in the universe:

ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p 1.

Submission to God's will is essential to bring harmony in life, to dispense with ego and to attain God's grace:

ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਹੋਵੈ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ ਤਾ ਖਸਮੈ ਕਾ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਾਇਸੀ॥

Ibid., p. 471.

7. *Guru* is the central idea in the spiritual progress of man. *Guru* is the spiritual preceptor but in Guru Nanak *bani*, *Guru* is the Divine word (*sabad*), therefore, *Guru* of Guru Nanak's ideology is not to be mistaken as an incarnation (*Avtar*) of God or God in human form as understood in Hindu religious traditions. According to Guru Nanak guidance of the *Guru* is essential for the spiritual upliftment of the disciple. The *Guru* gives the Holy Word to the disciples and shows the way of virtues and noble living and gives the knowledge of Truth (Ultimate Reality). Guru Nanak says:

ਭਾਈ ਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 59.

Also:

ਬਿਨ ਗੁਰ ਸੋਝੀ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.1344.

ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਸਭੁ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਹੋਈ॥

Ibid., p.831.

ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਮੋਖ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p.1041.

It is clear from 'Sidh Gost' of Guru Nanak that *Guru* in fact is the *Sabad* (Holy Word or the voice of God, the Truth):

ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ॥

Ibid., p.943.

ਗੁਰੂ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਘਰੁ ਜਾਣੈ॥

Ibid., p.1027.

8. *Sabad*, the Holy Word, the divine self-communication. In Sikhism the term *Sabad Guru* is used for the embodiment of Truth of Holy Name. Through *nam simran* (remembering God's Name and Meditation) the *Sabad Guru* makes the disciple see the vision of the Lord within his heart.
- 8a. For detailed study of the doctrine of *Nam* see chapter IV.
9. *Kirat Kamai* means honest and productive means of earning. Guru Nanak laid down that his disciples must earn their living by honest work (*Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p.1245). He forbade beggary, parasitism and living on alms (*Ibid.*, p.1245). This injunction of Guru Nanak is the perfect formula for establishing social justice in society. Through the practice of *Kirat Kamai* in true sense, can come to an end the evils of capitalism and exploitation of people if all individuals in society earn their bread through honest, moral and productive labour.
10. The practice of *sewa* (voluntary service) is considered essential for *bhakti* and salvation in Guru Nanak's teachings. The Guru says:
ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ॥
ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥
(If we serve the mankind in this world, then we will be honoured in the Court of God).

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.26.

Also:

ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ॥

Ibid., p.354.

ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸੰਤੋਖੀਆ ਸੇਵਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਈ॥

Ibid., p.421.

ਬਿਨੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਚੀ॥

Ibid., p.992.

The concept of *sewa* is an important motto which regulates a Sikh's relationship with the society. In fact Sikhism came into being to serve those who were suffering and needy. It was always the idea of service to humanity which prompted the Sikh Gurus to ameliorate the conditions of the people. Guru Nanak established institution of *langar* (free kitchen). The idea of the service to humanity prompted the Sikh Gurus to expand the sphere of *sewa* in the form of spiritual, social, political, educational or medical help.

11. *Vand Chhakna* means sharing one's earnings. According to Guru Nanak a true Sikh must share his earnings by contributing a portion of his income for collective welfare of the community and weaker sections of the society. The system of sharing one's produce was started by Guru Nanak through the institution of *langar* (free community kitchen). Subsequently the practice of contributing ten percent of one's earning (*daswand*) was made obligatory on each Sikh. The Sikh community as a whole does believe in Guru Nanak's teaching:

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ॥

(He alone, O Nanak! knoweth the way who earneth with the sweat of his brow and then shareth it with others).

Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.1245.

12. Guru Nanak's doctrine of *nam japo*, *kirat karo* and *vand chhako* is the pivotal of Sikh ethics and Sikh practices. It is the basic factor of the progressive outlook, healthy growth and prosperity of the Sikh community.

13. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p.1245.

14. ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ॥

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ॥

Ibid., p.1188.

15. ਇਸੁ ਜੁਗ ਕਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਪੜਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਭਾਈ॥

ਪੂਰੈ ਗੁਰਿ ਸਭ ਸੋਝੀ ਪਾਈ॥

ਐਬੈ ਅਗੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਖਾਈ॥੧॥

ਰਾਮ ਪੜਹੁ ਮਨਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥

ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਮੈਲੁ ਉਤਾਰੁ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਵਾਦਿ ਵਿਰੋਧਿ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾਇ॥

ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਫੀਕਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ॥

ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ॥੨॥

ਹਉਮੈ ਸੇਲਾ ਇਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ॥
 ਨਿਤ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਾ॥
 ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਭੇਟੇ ਜਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਆਰਾ॥੩॥
 ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਜਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰੈ॥
 ਗੁਰੁ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਪੰਚ ਸੰਘਾਰੈ॥
 ਆਪਿ ਤਰੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਕੁਲ ਤਾਰੈ॥੪॥
 ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਨਟਿ ਬਾਜੀ ਪਾਈ॥
 ਮਨਮੁਖ ਅੰਧ ਰਹੇ ਲਪਟਾਈ॥
 ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅਲਿਪਤ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ॥੫॥
 ਬਹੁਤੇ ਭੇਖ ਕਰੈ ਭੇਖਧਾਰੀ॥
 ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤਿਸਨਾ ਫਿਰੈ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੀ॥
 ਆਪੁ ਨ ਚੀਨੈ ਬਾਜੀ ਹਾਰੀ॥੬॥
 ਕਾਪੜ ਪਹਿਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ॥
 ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਅਤਿ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਈ॥
 ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵੇ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਈ॥੭॥
 ਨਾਮਿ ਰਤੇ ਸਦਾ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ॥
 ਗ੍ਰਿਹੀ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਾਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਗੀ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਸੇ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ॥੮॥

Ibid., p.230.

16. *Ibid.*, p.1.

17. ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ॥

Ibid., p.62.

18. *Ibid.*, p.1188.

At another place Guru Nanak emphatically stressed the importance of the *Dharma* and remarks:

ਕਰਮ ਪੇਡੁ ਸਾਖਾ ਹਰੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਫੁਲੁ ਫਲੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ॥

(The virtuous deeds are the trees, God's Name its branches, faith its flowers and the Divine Knowledge its fruits).

Ibid., p.1168.

19. ਰਾਹ ਦੋਵੇ ਇਕੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ ਸਿਝਸੀ॥
 ਕੁਫਰੰ ਗੋਅ ਕੁਫਰਾਣੈ ਪਇਆ ਦਝਸੀ॥
 ਸਭ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੁਬਹਾਨੁ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਈਐ॥
 ਸਿਝੈ ਦਰਿ ਦੀਵਾਨਿ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਈਐ॥

(He who knows the two paths to be one, shall alone find fulfilment. One who repudiates this faith must burn in hellfire. Merge yourself into Truth).

Ibid., p.142.

20. According to Guru Nanak *haumai* is the root cause of all the problems of life and it is responsible for human sufferings. In the case of ordinary

man his self-centredness (*haumai*) leads to aggressiveness, violence and exploitation. This evil tendency finds full expression through the five main vices i.e. lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. The egoist lives in a world of his own. He forgets his real purpose of life and his vision gets distorted by delusion on account of *haumai*. Guru Nanak says:

ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਇਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਗਇਆ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੰਮਿਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਮੁਆ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਦਿਤਾ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਲਇਆ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਖਣਿਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਗਇਆ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਚਿਆਰੁ ਕੂੜਿਆਰੁ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਪ ਪੁੰਨ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਰਕਿ ਸੁਰਗਿ ਅਵਤਾਰੁ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਹਮੈ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਰੋਵੈ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਭਰੀਐ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਧੋਵੈ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਤੀ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਖੋਵੈ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਸਿਆਣਾ॥
 ਮੇਖ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕੀ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ॥
 ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਛਾਇਆ॥
 ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇਆ॥
 ਹਉਮੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਤਾ ਦਰੁ ਸੁਝੈ॥
 ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣਾ ਕਥਿ ਕਥਿ ਲੂਝੈ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਲਿਖੀਐ ਲੇਖੁ॥
 ਜੇਹਾ ਵੇਖਹਿ ਤੇਹਾ ਵੇਖੁ॥

Ibid., p.466.

21. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਲਾਏ॥
 ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਾਚੈ ਰਹੈ ਸਮਾਏ॥

Ibid., p.946.

ਹਉਮੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਤਾ ਦਰੁ ਸੁਝੈ॥
 ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣਾ ਕਥਿ ਕਥਿ ਲੂਝੈ॥

Ibid., p.466.

ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਇ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p.226.

ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.1.

ਜਾ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਤਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰੀ॥ ਤਾ ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਮਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., p.879.

ਅਨਹਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਤਹ ਹਉਮੈ ਹੋਇ ਬਿਨਾਸੁ॥

Ibid., p.21.

ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਈ ਤਾ ਕੰਤ ਸਮਾਈ॥

ਤਉ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਪਾਈ॥

Ibid., p.750.

22. For detailed study see *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 941.

23. ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਚੇ ਕਾ ਭਉ ਪਾਵੈ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਅਘੜੁ ਘੜਾਵੈ॥

... ..

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਾਚਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਪਤਿ ਊਤਮ ਹੋਇ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਗਲ ਭਵਣ ਕੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਇ॥

Ibid., pp.941-942.

24. ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ॥

Ibid., p.8.

25. ਸੋ ਜੋਗੀ ਜੋ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਪਛਾਣੈ॥ ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ॥

ਕਾਜੀ ਸੋ ਜੋ ਉਲਟੀ ਕਰੈ॥ ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜੀਵਤੁ ਮਰੈ॥

ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ॥

ਆਪਿ ਤਰੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਕੁਲ ਤਾਰੈ॥

Ibid., p.662.

26. ਜੋਗ ਸਬਦੰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਬਦੰ ਬੇਦ ਸਬਦੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣਹ॥

ਖੜ੍ਹੀ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੂਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਸੂਦ੍ਰ ਸਬਦੰ ਪਰਾਕ੍ਰਿਤਹ॥

ਸਰਬ ਸਬਦੰ ਏਕ ਸਬਦੰ ਜੋ ਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਭੋਉ॥

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦਾਸੁ ਹੈ ਸੋਈ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਦੇਉ॥

Ibid., p.469.

27. ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਖਿੰਥਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਡੰਡੈ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਭਸਮ ਚੜਾਈਐ॥

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਮੁੰਦੀ ਮੂੰਡਿ ਮੁਡਾਇਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਸਿੰਝੀ ਵਾਈਐ॥

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੧॥

ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਮੜੀ ਮਸਾਣੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤਾੜੀ ਲਾਈਐ॥

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਦੇਸਿ ਦਿਸੰਤਰਿ ਭਵਿਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਈਐ॥

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੨॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟੈ ਤਾ ਸਹਸਾ ਤੂਟੈ ਧਾਵਤੁ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਈਐ॥

ਨਿਝਰੁ ਝਰੈ ਸਹਜ ਧੁਨਿ ਲਾਗੈ ਘਰ ਹੀ ਪਰਚਾ ਪਾਈਐ॥

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੩॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਵਤਿਆ ਮਰਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਐਸਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਕਮਾਈਐ॥

ਵਾਜੇ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਸਿੰਝੀ ਵਾਜੈ ਤਉ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਉ ਪਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p.730.

28. ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ॥
ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ॥
ਮੂਤ ਪਲੀਤੀ ਕਪੜੁ ਹੋਇ॥
ਦੇ ਸਾਬੁਣੁ ਲਈਐ ਓਹੁ ਧੋਇ॥
ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ॥
ਓਹੁ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ॥
ਪੁੰਨੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਆਖਣੁ ਨਾਹਿ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਹੁ॥
ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਆਵਹੁ ਜਾਹੁ॥

Ibid., p.4.

29. ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰੀ ਚਨਣਾਠੀਆ ਜੇ ਮਨੁ ਊਰਸਾ ਹੋਇ॥
ਕਰਣੀ ਭੁੰਗੁ ਜੇ ਰਲੈ ਘਟ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਪੂਜਾ ਹੋਇ॥੧॥
ਪੂਜਾ ਕੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਬਿਨੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਪੂਜ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਦੇਵ ਪਖਾਲੀਅਹਿ ਜੇ ਮਨੁ ਧੋਵੈ ਕੋਇ॥
ਜੂਠਿ ਲਹੈ ਜੀਉ ਮਾਜੀਐ ਮੇਖ ਪਇਆਣਾ ਹੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.489.

30. ਕਾਇਆ ਕਾਗਦੁ ਮਨੁ ਪਰਵਾਣਾ॥
ਸਿਰ ਕੇ ਲੇਖ ਨ ਪੜੈ ਇਆਣਾ॥
ਦਰਗਹ ਘੜੀਅਹਿ ਤੀਨੇ ਲੇਖ॥
ਖੋਟਾ ਕਾਮਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਵੇਖੁ॥੧॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਰੁਪਾ ਹੋਇ॥
ਖਰਾ ਖਰਾ ਆਖੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

Ibid., p.662.

31. This injunction has been explained in a symbolic form by Guru Nanak in the following hymn:
ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵਣੁ ਮੁਸਕਲੁ ਜਾ ਹੋਇ ਤਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥
ਅਵਲਿ ਅਉਲਿ ਦੀਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਮਿਠਾ ਮਸਕਲ ਮਾਨਾ ਮਾਲੁ ਮੁਸਾਵੈ॥
ਹੋਇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮੁ ਦੀਨ ਮੁਹਾਣੈ ਮਰਣ ਜੀਵਣ ਕਾ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਵੈ॥
ਰਬ ਕੀ ਰਜਾਇ ਮੰਨੇ ਸਿਰ ਉਪਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਮੰਨੇ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਵੈ॥
ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਬ ਜੀਆ ਮਿਹਰੰਮਤਿ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥

Ibid., p.141.

The key idea of this gospel has been elucidated by the fourth Guru, Ram Dass in the additional hymn to the above *slok* of Guru Nanak:

ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧੁ ਝੂਠੁ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਤਜਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ਚੁਕਾਵੈ॥

ਤਜਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਕਾਮਿਨੀ ਮੋਹੁ ਤਜੈ ਤਾ ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਪਾਵੈ॥
ਤਜਿ ਮਾਨੁ ਅਭਮਾਨੁ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਸੁਤ ਦਾਰਾ ਤਜਿ ਪਿਆਸ ਆਸ ਰਾਮ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਵੈ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਸਾਚ ਸਬਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ॥

Ibid., p.141.

- 31a. ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਕੁਝੁ॥
ਅਖੀ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਪਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਅ ਪਰ ਧਨ ਕੂਪੁ॥
ਕੰਨੀ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਕੰਨਿ ਪੈ ਲਾਇਤਬਾਰੀ ਖਾਹਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹੰਸਾ ਆਦਮੀ ਬਧੇ ਜਮਪੁਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ॥੨॥ਮ:੧॥
ਸਭੇ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗੈ ਜਾਇ॥
ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ॥
ਖਾਣਾ ਪੀਣਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਦਿਤੋਨੁ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਸੰਬਾਹਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਤਿਨਾ ਸੁਤਕੁ ਨਾਹਿ॥

Ibid., pp.472-73.

32. ਸੂਚੇ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਜਿ ਪਿੰਡਾ ਧੋਇ॥
ਸੂਚੇ ਸੇਈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜਿਨ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਸੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.472.

33. ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਣ ਜਾਉ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ॥
ਤੀਰਥੁ ਸਬਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਹੈ॥
ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਬਾਨੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਦਸ ਪੁਰਬ ਸਦਾ ਦਸਾਹਰਾ॥
ਹਉ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਸਦਾ ਜਾਚਉ ਦੇਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਰਣੀਧਾਰਾ॥
ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਰੋਗੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਬੂ ਮੈਲੁ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਚ ਬਿਨਾ॥
ਗੁਰ ਵਾਕੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਨਿਤ ਸਾਚੁ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਮਜਨਾ॥੧॥
ਸਾਚਿ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਕਿਆ ਮਲੁ ਧੋਈਐ॥
ਗੁਣਹਿ ਹਾਰੁ ਪਰੋਇ ਕਿਸ ਕਉ ਰੋਈਐ॥
ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ਮਾਰੈ ਤਰੈ ਤਾਰੈ ਉਲਟਿ ਜੋਨਿ ਨ ਆਵਏ॥
ਆਪਿ ਪਾਰਸੁ ਪਰਮ ਧਿਆਨੀ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਾਚੇ ਭਾਵਏ॥
ਆਨੰਦ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਹਰਖੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਦੂਖ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਰਹਰੇ॥
ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਮੈਲੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਸਚ ਮਨੇ॥੨॥
ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮੀਤ ਮਿਲਾਪੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਨਾਵਣੇ॥
ਗਾਵੈ ਗਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੇ॥
ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ਸਾਚੇ ਮੰਨਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਦਇਆ ਮਤੇ॥
ਪਿਰ ਸੰਗਿ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਥੋਣੀ ਤ ਸੰਗਮੁ ਸਤ ਸਤੇ॥
ਆਰਾਧਿ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਿਤ ਦੇਇ ਚੜੈ ਸਵਾਇਆ॥
ਗਤਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਸੰਤ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਨਦਰਿ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ॥੩॥

Ibid., pp.687-688.

34. According to Guru Nanak all deeds done must have its retribution. The

Guru confirms:

ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਨੈ ਜਾਹੁ॥
ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ॥

Ibid., p.4.

Also:

ਮੰਦਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਵਣਾ॥
ਹੁਕਮ ਕੀਏ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵਦੇ ਰਾਹਿ ਭੀੜੈ ਅਗੇ ਜਾਵਣਾ॥
ਨੰਗਾ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਚਾਲਿਆ ਤਾ ਦਿਸੈ ਖਰਾ ਡਰਾਵਣਾ॥

Ibid., pp.470-71.

Also:

ਜੈਸਾ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਤੈਸਾ ਪਾਵੈ॥
ਆਪਿ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਵੈ॥

Ibid., p.662.

ਜੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ਤੇਹਾ ਹੋਇਸੀ॥

Ibid., p.730.

ਤੈਸੇ ਜੈਸਾ ਕਾਢੀਐ ਜੈਸੀ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ॥

Ibid.

ਜੈਸਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੇ ਲੁਣੇ ਜੇ ਖਟੇ ਸੇ ਖਾਇ॥

Ibid.

35. ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ॥
ਕਰਣੀ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਤਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.952.

36. ਸਾਗਰ ਮਹਿ ਬੂੰਦ ਬੂੰਦ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਗਰੁ
ਕਵਣੁ ਬੁਝੈ ਬਿਧਿ ਜਾਣੇ॥
ਉਤਭੁਜ ਚਲਤ ਆਪਿ ਕਰਿ ਚੀਨੈ
ਆਪੇ ਤਤੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ॥੧॥
ਐਸਾ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੈ ਕੋਈ॥
ਤਿਸ ਤੇ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਰਮ ਗਤਿ ਹੋਈ॥

Ibid., pp.878-879.

37. ਸਚੇ ਸਚੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੈ ਪੁਛ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥

Ibid., p.952.

38. ਜਗੁ ਪਰਬੋਧਹਿ ਮੜੀ ਬਧਾਵਹਿ॥
ਆਸਣੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕਾਹੇ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਵਹਿ॥
ਮਮਤਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਹਿਤਕਾਰੀ॥
ਨਾ ਅਉਧੁਤੀ ਨਾ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ॥੧॥
ਜੋਗੀ ਬੈਸਿ ਰਹਹੁ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਭਾਗੈ॥

ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਮਾਗਤ ਲਾਜ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗੀਤ ਨ ਚੀਨਹਿ ਆਪੁ॥
 ਕਿਉ ਲਾਗੀ ਨਿਵਰੈ ਪਰਤਾਪੁ॥
 ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਰਚੈ ਮਨ ਭਾਇ॥
 ਭਿਖਿਆ ਸਹਜ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਖਾਇ॥੨॥
 ਭਸਮ ਚੜਾਇ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਾਖੰਡੁ॥
 ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਸਹਹਿ ਜਮ ਡੰਡੁ॥
 ਛੂਟੈ ਖਾਪਰੁ ਭੀਖ ਨ ਭਾਇ॥
 ਬੰਧਨਿ ਬਾਧਿਆ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ॥੩॥
 ਬਿੰਦੁ ਨ ਰਾਖਹਿ ਜਤੀ ਕਹਾਵਹਿ॥
 ਮਾਈ ਮਾਗਤ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਲੋਭਾਵਹਿ॥
 ਨਿਰਦਇਆ ਨਹੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਉਜਾਲਾ॥
 ਬੂਛਤ ਬੂਛੇ ਸਰਬ ਜੰਜਾਲਾ॥੪॥
 ਭੋਖ ਕਰਹਿ ਖੰਬਾ ਬਹੁ ਬਟੂਆ॥
 ਬੂਠੇ ਖੇਲੁ ਖੇਲੈ ਬਹੁ ਨਟੂਆ॥
 ਅੰਤਰਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਬਹੁ ਜਾਰੇ॥
 ਵਿਣੁ ਕਰਮਾ ਕੈਸੇ ਉਤਰਸਿ ਪਾਰੇ॥੫॥
 ਮੁੰਦ੍ਰਾ ਫਟਕ ਬਨਾਈ ਕਾਨਿ॥
 ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਦਿਆ ਬਿਗਿਆਨਿ॥
 ਜਿਹਵਾ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਦਿ ਲੋਭਾਨਾ॥
 ਪਸੂ ਭਏ ਨਹੀ ਮਿਟੈ ਨੀਸਾਨਾ॥੬॥
 ਤ੍ਰਿਬਿਧਿ ਲੋਗਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਬਿਧਿ ਜੋਗਾ॥
 ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੈ ਚੂਕਸਿ ਸੋਗਾ॥
 ਊਜਲੁ ਸਾਚੁ ਸੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੋਇ॥
 ਜੋਗੀ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ਸੋਇ॥੭॥
 ਤੁਝ ਪਹਿ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਤੂ ਕਰਣੈ ਜੋਗੁ॥
 ਬਾਪਿ ਉਬਾਧੇ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਹੋਗੁ॥
 ਜਤੁ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਸਚੁ ਸੁਚੀਤੁ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜੋਗੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਮੀਤੁ॥੮॥

Ibid., p.903.

39. ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਸਾਧੀਐ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਕੀਚੈ ਵਾਸੁ॥
 ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਚੇ ਕਿਆ ਤਾਸੁ॥
 ਜੇਹਾ ਰਾਧੇ ਤੇਹਾ ਲੁਣੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਣ ਜਨਮੁ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ॥੧॥
 ਮੁੰਧੇ ਗੁਣ ਦਾਸੀ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ॥
 ਅਵਗਣ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਸਮਾਈਐ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਸੋਇ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

Ibid., p.96.

40. Some of Guru Nanak's observations about the recommendation of householder's life and condemnation of recluse life are given below:

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ॥

ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ॥

Ibid., p.661.

ਧਨੁ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਜੋਗੀ ਜਿ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣੀ ਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਲਾਏ॥

Ibid., p.1013.

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਮਝੀ ਮਸਾਣੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤਾੜੀ ਲਾਈਐ॥

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਦੇਸਿ ਦਿਸੰਤਰਿ ਭਵਿਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਈਐ॥

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p.730.

ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜੋ ਨਿਗ੍ਰਹੁ ਕਰੈ॥ ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਭੀਖਿਆ ਕਰੈ॥

ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਕਾ ਕਰੈ ਸਰੀਰੁ॥ ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਕਾ ਨੀਰੁ॥

Ibid., p.952.

ਪਰਵਿਰਤਿ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਜੇਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੋਈਐ ਤੇਤਾ ਲੋਗੁ ਪਚਾਰਾ॥

Ibid., p.1205.

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਰ ਅਪਸਰ ਬਿਧਿ ਜਾਣੈ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਰਵਿਰਤਿ ਨਰਵਿਰਤਿ ਪਛਾਣੈ॥

Ibid., p.941.

ਰਹਹਿ ਇਕਾਤਿ ਏਕੋ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਆਸਾ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰਾਸੋ॥

ਅਗਮੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਿਖਾਏ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦਾਸੋ॥

Ibid., p.938.

ਇਕਿ ਭਗਵਾ ਵੇਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਜੋਗੀ ਸੰਨਿਆਸਾ॥

ਅੰਦਰਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਛਾਦਨ ਭੋਜਨ ਕੀ ਆਸਾ॥

ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇ ਨ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਨ ਉਦਾਸਾ॥

Ibid., p. 140.

41. ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਮੁਰਗਈ ਨੈ ਸਾਣੈ॥

ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ॥

ਰਹਹਿ ਇਕਾਤਿ ਏਕੋ ਮਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਆਸਾ ਮਹਿ ਨਿਰਾਸੋ॥

ਅਗਮੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਿਖਾਏ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦਾਸੋ॥

Ibid., p. 938.

Also:

ਵਿਚੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੈ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਜਿਉ ਕਮਲੁ ਰਹੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਣੀ ਹੇ॥

Ibid., p. 1070.

The above ideology of Guru Nanak has been also explained in the hymn of the fourth Guru, Ram Dass as :

ਸਚਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੁ ਮਨਿ ਘਰ ਹੀ ਮਾਹਿ ਉਦਾਸਾ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਨਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਸੇ ਆਸਾ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਾਸਾ॥

Ibid., p.140.

42. ਸੂਚੈ ਭਾਡੈ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਮਾਵੈ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਸੂਚਾਚਾਰੀ॥
ਤੰਤੈ ਕਉ ਪਰਮ ਤੰਤੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਣਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., p.597.

43. ਅਵਗੁਣ ਛੋਡਿ ਗੁਣਾ ਕਉ ਧਾਵਹੁ ਕਰਿ ਅਵਗੁਣ ਪਛੁਤਾਹੀ ਜੀਉ॥
ਸਰ ਅਪਸਰ ਕੀ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਕੀਚ ਬੁਢਾਹੀ ਜੀਉ॥੨॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਮੈਲੁ ਲੋਭ ਬਹੁ ਬੂਠੇ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਨਾਵਹੁ ਕਾਹੀ ਜੀਉ॥
ਨਿਰਮਲ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਸਦੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਤਾਹੀ ਜੀਉ॥੩॥
ਪਰਹਰਿ ਲੋਭੁ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਤਿਆਗਹੁ ਸਚੁ ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨੀ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਹੀ ਜੀਉ॥੪॥

Ibid., p.598.

44. ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਉ ਪਾਈਐ॥

Ibid., p.730.

45. ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੇ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਏ॥
ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਜਾਗੈ ਸਚਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ॥
ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥
ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਸੇਵੇ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਇ॥੬॥
ਸੇਵਾ ਸੁਗਤਿ ਸਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ॥
ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰਿ॥
ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਜਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਏ॥
ਸਚੀ ਰਹਤੁ ਸਚਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ॥੧॥

Ibid., p. 1343.

46. ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ॥
ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਬਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਕੇ ਰੰਗ॥
ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਨੰਤ॥
ਕਰਮੀ ਕਰਮੀ ਹੋਇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
ਸਚਾ ਆਪਿ ਸਚਾ ਦਰਬਾਰੁ॥
ਤਿਥੈ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਪੰਚ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥
ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਪਵੈ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ॥
ਕਚ ਪਕਾਈ ਓਥੈ ਪਾਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਗਇਆ ਜਾਪੈ ਜਾਇ॥੩੪॥
ਧਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਏਹੋ ਧਰਮੁ॥
ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਕਾ ਆਖਹੁ ਕਰਮੁ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਵੈਸੰਤਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕਾਨ ਮਹੇਸ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਬਰਮੇ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਅਹਿ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਕੇ ਵੇਸ॥
ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਮੇਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਧੂ ਉਪਦੇਸ॥

ਕੇਤੇ ਇੰਦ ਚੰਦ ਸੂਰ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਮੰਡਲ ਦੇਸ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਸਿਧ ਬੁਧ ਨਾਥ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵੀ ਵੇਸ॥
 ਕੇਤੇ ਦੇਵ ਦਾਨਵ ਮੁਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਤਨ ਸਮੁੰਦ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਖਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੇਤੇ ਪਾਤ ਨਰਿੰਦ॥
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੇਤੇ ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਅੰਤ॥੩੫॥

Ibid., p. 7.

47. ਗਿਆਨ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਪਰਚੰਡ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਨਾਦ ਬਿਨੋਦ ਕੋਡ ਅਨੰਦ॥

Ibid.

48. ਸਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘਾੜਤਿ ਘੜੀਐ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਅਨੂਪ॥
 ਤਾ ਕੀਆ ਗਲਾ ਕਥੀਆ ਨਾ ਜਾਹਿ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਛੁਤਾਇ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਤਿ ਮਨਿ ਬੁਧਿ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਘੜੀਐ ਸੁਰਾ ਸਿਧਾ ਕੀ ਸੁਧਿ॥੩੬॥

Ibid., pp. 7-8

49. ਕਰਮ ਖੰਡ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਜੋਰੁ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰੁ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਜੋਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੂਰ॥
 ਤਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਸੀਤੇ ਸੀਤਾ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਮਾਹਿ॥
 ਤਾ ਕੇ ਰੂਪ ਨ ਕਥਨੇ ਜਾਹਿ॥
 ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਠਾਗੇ ਜਾਹਿ॥
 ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਭਗਤ ਵਸਹਿ ਕੇ ਲੋਅ॥
 ਕਰਹਿ ਅੰਨਦੁ ਸਚਾ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਇ॥

Ibid., p. 8.

50. ਸਚ ਖੰਡਿ ਵਸੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ॥
 ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਕਥੈ ਤ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਅੰਤ॥
 ਤਿਥੈ ਲੋਅ ਲੋਅ ਆਕਾਰ॥
 ਜਿਵ ਜਿਵ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਵੈ ਤਿਵ ਕਾਰ॥
 ਵੇਖੈ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਕਰਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕਥਨਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਾਰੁ॥੩੭॥
 ਜਤੁ ਪਾਹਾਰਾ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਸੁਨਿਆਰੁ॥
 ਅਹਰਣਿ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਦੁ ਹਥੀਆਰੁ॥

ਭਉ ਖਲਾ ਅਗਨਿ ਤਪ ਤਾਉ॥
ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ॥
ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ॥
ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਤਿਨ ਕਾਰ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਦਰੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲ॥੩੮॥

Ibid.

GURU NANAK AND INDIAN RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

Madanjit Kaur

In the *bani* of Guru Nanak there is very little appreciation for any particular form of religious belief and practice, whether Hindu or Muslim, the conquering religion. The contemporary milieu was inflicted with the inter-religious conflicts between Hinduism and Islam and the sectarian fragmentation of the Indian society into various forms of dogmatism. The cultural and social context in which Guru Nanak (A.D. 1469-1539) had to operate was predominantly Hindu. It is clearly evident from the hymns of Guru Nanak that he addressed to the Hindus who were ill-acquainted with the essence of their scriptures¹ and that Hinduism had declined to meaningless rituals, customs and hypocritical beliefs.² The Nath and *Kanphata* Yogis form another important sector of the audience of Guru Nanak.³ The Guru criticised them as hypocrites, who were a negative influence on the common man and the society in which they lived.⁴ However, positive appreciation is reserved for *nirgun bhakti*.

It is equally evident from the *bani* of Guru Nanak that Islam too as a religion was not fulfilling its obligatory social function. Guru Nanak confronted his Muslim audience through their own traditions. As in the case of Pandits of Hinduism, so the representatives of Islam i.e. the *qazis* and *mullahs* are criticized for their failure to live according to the requirements they may lay down for others.⁵ Addressing Muslim audience Guru Nanak sought to guide them along the same path of a universal morality that he indicated to the followers of Hinduism. His

dispensation for the Muslims are contained particularly in 'Var Majh'.⁶ A close association of Guru Nanak's *bhakti* with the Sant tradition, negates the hypothesis of a direct Muslim influence upon his ideals, as well as the notion of Sikhism as a deliberate attempt to produce synthesis of Hinduism and Islam. The Guru is not to be seen as synthesizer of faiths but as a holyman who reinterpreted his inheritance and made a significant contribution to the cultural heritage of India. Rising to a higher plane, he declared the apparent divergencies of creed, particularly between Hinduism and Islam as two paths to be one.⁷

II

Hinduism is not a unified and integrated religious system. It is a grouping together of cults and creeds that are at times quite at variance in their doctrines and fundamental concerns. Religions of Vedic origin are iconographic, introspective and mystical. By this test Sikhism, being a non-idolatorous, prophetic and revelatory religion essentially imbibes the characteristics that distinguish its independent identity. And thus by implication Sikhism is a non-Hindu religion.⁸

The central affirmation of the faith of Guru Nanak is that: God is one without a second⁹ and God is acting as free agent (*Karta Purakh*), the Creator of the cosmos¹⁰ of which man is only one part. This theology has far reaching consequences. The consequences of the experience of Ultimate Reality as 'One' and 'self disclosing' was that Guru Nanak denounced as false all those forms of religious traditions which denied the unity of God, and the systems which encouraged man to observe rituals, austerities, penance and sufferings for the sake of salvation. Jainism for its rejection of belief in God as well as its neglect of social responsibilities was condemned outright.¹¹ In fact the attitude of Guru Nanak towards the Jains highlights the social and theistic emphasis of his theology.¹²

For the rejection of exterior forms and rituals but their affirmation

of unity and mystical union with God, the Nath beliefs certainly exercised an influence. We find an extensive use of Nath terminology in the *bani* of Guru Nanak.¹³ Nevertheless, the Nath Yogis fared only little better than their contemporaries.¹⁴ Their inclination towards sectarian strife, withdrawal from life, dependency on public charity together with their belief that liberation could be achieved only by effort and suffering meant that Guru Nanak had to reject their path as a way of futility even though he regarded their description of the ultimate goal (mystical union with God) as valid. Guru Nanak explicitly rejected Nath methods and beliefs and his *bani* bears clear evidence of an open controversy with Nath Yogis.¹⁵

An important aspect of the teachings of Guru Nanak is the examination and evaluation of the yogic system prevalent in contemporary India.¹⁶ Guru Nanak found the yogic cults very widespread and popular. In fact the yogic cult was a dominating influence on the spiritual life of the Hindu Society. The *bani* of Guru Nanak marks out a clear disapproval of the yogic practices and withdrawal from the world. Like Kabir, he called attention to the fact that claiming miraculous power of yoga, they were following only wordly pursuit (*maya*). The putative spiritual attainment was truly achieved by *sahaj* and beneficent action.¹⁷

Guru Nanak rejected *Paranyam* and *Hatha* and severely condemned Shaktism.¹⁸ The yogic practices involving occult rites and miracles are rejected. Instead he commanded the centring of the spiritual life in beneficent action in society.¹⁹

It is evident from his *bani* that *Yoga* was familiar to the masses, that Guru Nanak had to make use of Yogic terminology in explaining his theology. The terms *Sahaj*, *Maharas*, *Mahaanand*, *Dasam Duar*, *Riddhi*, *Siddhi* and *Anhad Sabada*, are employed as symbols of ethico-spiritual attainments in his *bani*. The term *Raj Yoga* occurs in *Swaiyya* 6 of Kala Bhatt, in context of Guru Nanak. But here *Raj*

Yoga, is an equivalent to the Guru's enlightenment, his complete victory over the carnal and his attainment of God. The term *Raj Yoga* here does not imply any form of Yoga. Nathism and the faith of Nanak present opposite world-views:

The fundamental difference is that Nathism rejects the world and life as *maya* and misery. But Sikhism accepts them as spiritually meaningful. In Nathism withdrawal from the world, asceticism, celibacy, the rejection and downgrading of women, renunciation, solitude, yogic methodology are essential. In Sikhism, God being attributive, virtuous participating in the world, accepting the house-holder's life and social responsibilities, respect for women and service of man in all spheres of life is necessary. There is hardly a meeting ground between the two systems.²⁰

The ideal life commended by Guru Nanak is that of the householder (*grihasthi*) engaged in beneficent activity, keeping his mind absorbed in contemplating and devotion. The synthesis of the spiritual and the secular is meant to reject the monastic or ascetic kind of life. The various brands of mendicancy in contemporary India such as Yogis, *Bairagi*, *Avadhut*, *Siddha*, are disapproved as their way of life is barren, cut off from the stream of humanity.²¹

In *Siddha gosht* (dialogues with the *Siddhas*) Guru Nanak has emphasised the void in the spiritual experience of the ascetics.²² Further, *Siddha gosht* gives a detailed exposition of Guru Nanak's view on the prevalent forms of asceticism and mendicancy to bring out the barren, negative features of their practices which benefit no one in society.²³

The conception of true detachment in the theology of Guru Nanak is not of one, who observes the outer symbols of an ascetic or mendicant order but of a person who keeps his ego under restraint, one who sublimates his desires and seeks the truth.²⁴

It was the Sant tradition (*nirgun sampraday*) which provided the

basis of Guru Nanak's thought.²⁵ He uses their terminology and affirms their doctrines.²⁶ However, there is an impact of Guru Nanak's originality upon the inheritance, he received. The *bhakti* path of *Sant Parampara* was not a simple way of attaining liberation but was involved in complex and difficult methods. Guru Nanak received the Sant synthesis but to expand and reinterpret these ideas in an integrated manner in his theology.²⁷ This tells on his description of the nature of mystic experience (manner of divine communication with man) with concepts like *Sabad*, the *Nam*, the *Guru* and the *Hukum*.

Although one of the significant influence upon the thought of Guru Nanak has been *bhakti*, but the cults of Vaishnava *bhakti*²⁸ and Shaiva *bhakti* did not escape his criticism.

The social implications of the Vaishnav and Shaiva cults are among the more debated subjects of the contemporary Indian religious traditions. In fact the Vaishnav and Shaiva *bhakti* traditions are part of the general process of social-change in which the four class system of Hindu society exists as inflexible and hierarchical institutional structure. Guru Nanak wanted for a more flexible multi-centered mode of social organisation based more on voluntary association than on rigid social stratification. Moreover, religious systems that are ascetic or monastic have generally a harsh attitude towards women. Their world-view involves a virtual withdrawal from social life and they are never bothered about bringing any social change.²⁹

The fundamentals of the Vaishnav, Shaiva and even Krishan cults (i.e. acceptance of religious authority of the Vedic scripture, belief in *avtar*, *varan*, rituals etc.) were basically a part and parcel of the Brahminical tradition. In addition, they had faith in mystic potency of the *mantras* (sacred formulas) and their *bhakti* was essentially formal and ritualistic without its ever fructifying into efficacious deeds in the social field.³⁰ Guru Nanak clearly denies the scriptural authority of Vedas³¹, and is critical of the caste distinction and rejects the belief in

avtar.³² He emphasised virtuous deeds to seek the grace of God. All deeds done must find retribution. From this law there is no escape.³³ According to Guru Nanak it is virtuous deeds that are the essence of spiritual life.

In response to the spiritual claims of the Vaishnav and Shaiva cults, Guru Nanak asserted that the Supreme Reality lay beyond the garbs and forms of sectarianism and sacred *mantras*. All formal rituals, customs, ceremonies, taboos and austerities are denigrated as they lead the self away from loving devotion (*bhakti*). The consequence of Hindu philosophy of *dvait* (duality), Guru Nanak saw as the worst of all evils.³⁴ From an acceptance of duality all other faults arose i.e., belief in polytheism, self sufficiency (*haumai*), transmigration, asceticism, indulgence in ritualism etc.

There is an obvious contrast between the Brahmanic *bhakti* traditions and Sikhism in all the essentials. While Sikhism is strictly theistic, the Hindu *bhakti* traditions are pantheistic. The world-view of the religion of Guru Nanak is life affirming and ethical but the one of the Brahmanic tradition involves a virtual withdrawal from the world. Besides, their basic difference lies in the value system prescribed by Guru Nanak. Instead of giving importance to pilgrimage, renunciation and meditation in seclusion the Guru laid emphasis on humanitarianism with its constituents of charity, compassion and forgiveness which are essential aspects of true religion.³⁵

‘Bhakti’ (devotion) is the path above all commended by Guru Nanak for realization of the God. Learning and intellectual feats are discountenanced since they are source of disputation.³⁶ Like *Gita* the essence of Guru Nanak *bhakti* lies in the quest for the divine humility, self dedication and complete self-surrender to the mercy and grace of the Supreme Being.³⁷ In the hymns of Guru Nanak the true *bhakti* is the path of dedication to high ideals.³⁸ The devotee must be perfect in his devotion and engaged in holy beneficent action.

The path commended by the Guru harmoniously integrates asceticism and involvement in the world. This is a noble ethical synthesis in which the seeker while fixing his gaze on the Ultimate, the Absolute, at the same time looks upon the sphere of duty in the world as real, and calling for his earnest endeavour to do good and to bring good to others.³⁹

All this stands contrary to the extreme Vedantic belief that the phenomenal world is false and illusion (*mithaya/maya*). But the scheme of life commended by Guru Nanak is not the way of recluse but that of the devoted unassuming man of action.⁴⁰ Man is to be engaged in action that may further God's plan of righteousness in the world. The path of *bhakti* may make a call for sacrifice and martyrdom.⁴¹

III

Many elements in the thought of Guru Nanak have affinity with Sufi concepts which suggest Muslim influence. But the apparent similarity is misleading. No doubt:

Islam with its strong emphasis on unity of God, its casteless view of society and its belief that it was through family life and social responsibility that man served God, might have expected to be commended by Guru Nanak, but formalism of Indian Islam earned his disapproval.⁴²

In fact Guru Nanak explicitly rejected the version of Islam he came into contact. There are occasional references to such contacts in his *bani*.

The attempts to trace Muslim influence in Guru Nanak's teachings have usually been made by those who were themselves ignorant of various strands in Hindu religious thought or who were sometimes consciously serving the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity by their manipulative efforts at misreading history. It is neither necessary nor feasible to try to discover Muslim influence in Guru Nanak's pattern of

teaching. That he was aware of current Muslim thought is without doubt. That some of his admonitions are addressed to Muslims must be taken into consideration. But his teachings show at the most only a marginal influence of Sufism, encouraging certain development but in no case providing the actual source of the new innovations, introduced by him. Almost all evident affinities with Islam found in the theology of Guru Nanak can be traced back to native Indian traditions.⁴³ Besides, there is a conspicuous lack of Sufi terminology in the religious thought of Guru Nanak. The use of Persian terms common among Sufis (used by Guru Nanak) indicate no Sufi influence, but rather, Guru Nanak's proficiency in the Persian language. In choosing names of God his preference is strongly for Puranic names and when dealing with the concept which has obvious affinities with Sufi beliefs he will preferably use a non-Sufi term. Moreover, some of the fundamental aspects of Guru Nanak's doctrines like his acceptance of *Karma*, belief in transmigration of soul are in direct conflict with Islam. Further, his belief in the need to destroy *maya* through *nam simran* does not correspond to the Sufi technique of *dhikr*, and the concept of five *khands* (realms of *Japuji*) do not go along even remotely with the *maqamat* of Sufis.⁴⁴ The emphasis of Guru Nanak on the importance of *guru* and union with God could have cut no ice with contemporary Muslims and were never addressed to them. May be, Guru Nanak visited Baba Farid's successor at Pak Patan, but no dialogues with Sufis are recorded in his *bani* as one with the *Siddhas* and Yogis (*Siddh Gost*). It seems, such an inter-faith dialogue with the Muslims could not have been possible in that age.

No doubt Islam through Sufism provided a strong encouragement in strengthening monotheistic tendencies and belief in the omnipresence of God. But the monotheism of Guru Nanak is an independent concept and must be regarded primarily as an inheritance from *bhakti* tradition rather than an influence of Islam. Therefore, the impact of Muslim influence upon the thought of Guru Nanak must accordingly be regarded as relatively slight.⁴⁵ However, this observation should not be

pressed to total rejection of the impact of Islam on the thought of Guru Nanak. The Sant traditions had already absorbed a certain measure of Islamic influence. Most of the elements in Guru Nanak which suggest Muslim influence evidently reached him through Sant tradition. Therefore, the influence of Islam on Guru Nanak was received through 'cultural fusion', it was limited and it had no fundamental significance in his theology.

It is equally important to study Guru's attitude to Hinduism or Islam. It would be wrong to make generalised statement and say that Guru Nanak regarded Hinduism or Islam as either true or false. Such stereotyped view of the major contemporary religious systems is too doubtful to be held by the Great Guru.⁴⁶ He did not doubt their sacred texts but he condemned the use to which these were being put. Yet he stops short of declaring these as eternal. On the evidence of his *bani* the conclusion must be reached that Guru Nanak rarely expressed an attitude towards Hinduism or Islam as such. Normally he viewed them in a general, comprehensive way. His comments are usually directed at particular aspects, more often of practice than of belief.⁴⁷ He did not consider them to be fundamentally right or fundamentally wrong but to be composed of variety of religious elements, some pointing to truth, many away from it.⁴⁸

Guru Nanak proclaimed the unity of God and refused to recognise that Hindus and Muslims were fundamentally different. For example, Guru Nanak's first words after his enlightenment were '*Na Hindu Na Musalman*' (there is no Hindu, no Mussalman). The true intent and meaning of what Guru Nanak uttered on the occasion of his mystic experience has plausible answers:

Whether he meant that deep down in the substratum of Aryan and Semitic religions there is an identity of base or whether he intended to convey that the truth of both had been obscured and lost to their practitioners on account of verbal formulae and

empty rituals, it was a fit formula for the commencement of his divine mission that demands acceptance of genuine dialogue rather than formal conversion as the goal of transcending particularism of condemning cultures and fending religions.⁴⁹

IV

The aim of the Guru seemed to discover a universal concept, not syncretic amalgam, but deeper penetration of universal spiritualism.⁵⁰ All great truths were, for him, the property of human race and not restricted to a particular faith. He aspired for a universal religion.⁵¹ In his view, to attain the truth, it was necessary to be more than a Hindu or Muslim, one must possess direct knowledge of God through His Grace. The real religion is not in symbols, forms or dogmas, it lies in the experience, the soul, and its union with the Supreme Reality.⁵² The Guru made concrete efforts to free the faith from cultural restrictions, seeking to liberate truth from constraints which had obscured it.

Guru Nanak's message was universal in the sense that his attack on certain evils of the day made no distinction and spared the outward symbols of neither Hindus nor Muslims. According to Guru Nanak both Hinduism and Islam had lost their merits on account of the negation of faith by their followers. The Guru appealed to the man underneath a Hindu or a Muslim. But he made no attempt at uniting Hinduism and Islam of his days.⁵³ He had no intention or inclination for such a pedestrian, programme.

An objective study of Guru Nanak's beliefs and teachings would amply demonstrate that his message was mainly addressed to Hindus of his days and took the Hindu background of thought and philosophy for granted of course with the originality of the pattern of thought, evolved by him.

Guru Nanak laid the foundation of a liberal theology within the protestant framework. Not only the obligation of doctrinal orthodoxy has been abandoned but also every fixed position i.e. rituals, rites,

sacraments, customs and ceremonies, *Varan* and *Jati* and even adherence to classical languages has become open to question in the process of making sense out of man and his situation. This ideology has a universal appeal. Even the communicative devices of Guru Nanak's teachings with emotional orientation (*Ragas*) have an inherent quality of universal appeal.

What distinguished Guru Nanak from the *bhaktas* and the *sants* was his revolutionary and progressive outlook supported by positive and practical action. Even the social impact of the teachings of the radical *bhaktas* (i.e. Kabir, Ravidas and Namdev etc.) fell short of projecting and affecting any major social transformation and effecting any major social change into the Hindu society. They intended not to bring any structural change in the society but rather they seem to intend for the modification and adjustment within the existing framework of Hindu *Varan ashram dharma* and fixity of the Brahminical orthodoxy.⁵⁴ Among the radical religious reformers it was only Guru Nanak who consolidated the spirit of dissent and protest against religious dogmatism, polytheism, caste-labour, gender inequality, social discrimination, political exploitation and injustice into a coherent systematic coordination of spiritual metaphysics and temporal obligations. Guru Nanak projected new goals before the masses and sought to introduce a progressive religion based on the fundamental doctrine of unity of God and equality of mankind.

Therefore, Guru Nanak's mission culminated in a distinct faith and not a sect within the realm of the Indian Religious traditions. As an impact of Guru Nanak's teachings the land of Punjab became vehicle of spreading the message of a new social awareness in the Indian sub-continent. In fact, Guru Nanak envisaged a revolutionary transformation of the Indian society. He not only gave a new religious thought at metaphysical level but also took practical steps by introducing the institutions of *sangat*, *pangat*, *langar*, *nam simran*,

kirat karna, vand chhakna and *sewa* to provide an ideal framework of an egalitarian society; which have in fact proved a nucleus of the Sikh *Panth* ever since its origin. It was the intensity and depth of Guru Nanak's message and mission not only on the spiritual but also at the temporal plane that served as an edifice for the evolution of Sikh community.

It is clearly evident from the above study that the theology of Guru Nanak projects the individual identity of Sikhism in a sharper focus. In comparison to religious traditions of Hinduism and Islam including Bhakti cult and Sufism, it is the faith of Nanak alone "which instead of seeking accommodation either within Hinduism or Islam, chose to protest against both of them, revolt against the former and confront the latter. "It is in this revolutionary configuration of protest, revolt and confrontation that the inner urges and aspirations of Sikhism sought and achieved their basic articulation not only mystically and metaphysically but even historically...."⁵⁵ The fact that Guru Nanak laid the foundation of a distinct religious system does not mean that Guru Nanak saw his *Panth* as an alternative to the other faiths. The Guru probably saw it as a vehicle for continuing to witness to the Truth he had been preaching for all his life. For this purpose Guru Nanak introduced the institution of Guruship to carry on the task laid by him.

Notes and References

1. ਕਲਿ ਕਲਵਾਲੀ ਸਰਾ ਨਿਬੇੜੀ ਕਾਜੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਹੋਆ॥
ਬਾਣੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬੇਦੁ ਅਥਰਬਣੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਲਹਿਆ॥
.....
ਕਲਿ ਪਤਵਾਣੁ ਕਤੇਬ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ॥ ਪੋਥੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਰਹੇ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਉ ਭਇਆ ਰਹਮਾਣੁ॥
(The *qazis* administer a new law, the *shariat*; *kaliyuga* forces the acceptance of semitic books and *Quran*. The *Purans* and Brahminical scriptures have gone down. God has changed into Rehman).
Guru Granth Sahib, p. 903.
2. ਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਉ ਕਰੁ ਲਾਵਹੁ ਗੋਬਰਿ ਤਰਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥
ਧੋਤੀ ਟਿਕਾ ਤੈ ਜਪਮਾਲੀ ਧਾਨੁ ਮਲੇਛਾ ਖਾਈ॥

ਅੰਤਰਿ ਪੂਜਾ ਪੜਹਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਸੰਜਮ ਤੁਰਕਾ ਭਾਈ॥
ਛੋਡੀਲੇ ਪਾਖੰਡਾ॥ ਨਾਮਿ ਲਇਐ ਜਾਹਿ ਤਰੰਦਾ॥

(A Hindu helps the state in collecting taxes on cows and *brahmins* and incongruously believes that plastering the floor with cowdung would lead to his redemption. Despite his *dhoti*, a mark on his forehead and his rosary he lives on gifts from the Muslims. He worships secretly, but in public he flaunts his smatterings of the ruling class culture. It is time to get rid of elaborate hypocrisy).

Ibid, p. 471.

Also:

ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਿਵਾਜ॥ ਛੁਰੀ ਵਗਾਇਨਿ ਤਿਨ ਗਲਿ ਤਾਗ॥
ਤਿਨ ਘਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਪੂਰਹਿ ਨਾਦ॥ ਉਨ੍ਹਾ ਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਓਈ ਸਾਦ॥
ਕੂੜੀ ਰਾਸਿ ਕੂੜਾ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ॥ ਕੂੜੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਆਹਾਰੁ॥
ਸਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਡੇਰਾ ਦੂਰਿ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੂੜੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ॥
ਮਥੈ ਟਿਕਾ ਤੇਤਿ ਧੋਤੀ ਕਖਾਈ॥ ਹਥਿ ਛੁਰੀ ਜਗਤ ਕਾਸਾਈ॥
ਨੀਲ ਵਸਤੁ ਪਹਿਰਿ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥ ਮਲੇਛ ਧਾਨੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਨਿ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ॥
ਅਭਾਖਿਆ ਕਾ ਕੁਠਾ ਬਕਰਾ ਖਾਣਾ॥ ਚਉਕੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਕਿਸੈ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ॥
ਦੇ ਕੈ ਚਉਕਾ ਕਢੀ ਕਾਰ॥ ਉਪਰਿ ਆਇ ਬੈਠੇ ਕੂੜਿਆਰ॥
ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ ਵੇ ਮਤੁ ਭਿਟੈ॥ ਇਹੁ ਅੰਨੁ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਫਿਟੈ॥
ਤਨਿ ਫਿਟੈ ਫੇੜ ਕਰੇਨਿ॥ ਮਨਿ ਜੂਠੈ ਚੁਲੀ ਭਰੇਨਿ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੁ ਧਿਆਈਐ॥ ਸੁਚਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਤਾ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥

(The corrupt *qazi* and the Muslim rulers behave like cannibals. The *Khatri* functionaries under them who wear the sacred thread, wield knives on the necks of the subjects. The *brahmins* ritually sound conchshells in the homes of the *khatri*s. They partake of the ill-gotten gifts too. They live off falsehood. *Dharma* and sense of honour have taken to wings. Falsity is reigning supreme. The *khatri* wears a mark on forehead and a raddish *dhoti*, but wields the knife to butcher the subject classes. He presents himself before the Muslim in blue clothes. He pretends to venerate the *Puranas* but he works for men who are called *malechh*. He eats *haial* meat, but he would ritually mark his place of eating against unclean. The man inside the ritually marked space is unclean. These unclean trunks of men are putting on acts. They wash their mouths, yet their mind remains unclean).

Ibid, pp. 471-72.

3. See, *Sidh Gost, Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 938-46.

4. There are various hymns of Guru Nanak in which the ways and ideals of the Naths have been denounced and the right ways and approach indicated. See *Ibid*, pp. 4, 343, 418, 730, 886, 939, 955, 972-73, 1245.
5. See *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 24, 141, 466, 662, 721, 903, 951, 956, 966 and 1245.

The essence of a true Mussalman has been described by the Guru as:-

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵਣੁ ਮੁਸਕਲੁ ਜਾ ਹੋਇ ਤਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥
 ਅਵਲਿ ਅਉਲਿ ਦੀਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਮਿਠਾ ਮਸਕਲ ਮਾਨਾ ਮਾਲੁ ਮੁਸਾਵੈ॥
 ਹੋਇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮੁ ਦੀਨ ਮੁਹਾਣੈ ਮਰਣ ਜੀਵਣ ਕਾ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਵੈ॥
 ਰਬ ਕੀ ਰਜਾਇ ਮੰਨੇ ਸਿਰ ਉਪਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਮੰਨੇ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਵੈ॥
 ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਰਬ ਜੀਆ ਮਿਹਰੰਮਤਿ ਹੋਇ ਤ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਕਹਾਵੈ॥

(Hard it is to become a true Muslim;

Only one truly such may be so called

His first action, to love the way of the holy;

Second, to shed off his heart's filth as on the grindstone.

One professing to be a guide to Muslim must shed the illusion of life and death.

To God's will must he submit;

Obey God and efface his self.

Such a one shall be a blessing for all,

And be truly reckoned a Muslim).

Ibid., p. 141.

Also:

ਮਿਹਰ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਦਕੁ ਮੁਸਲਾ ਹਕੁ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ॥
 ਸਰਮ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਸੀਲੁ ਰੋਜਾ ਹੋਹੁ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ॥
 ਕਰਣੀ ਕਾਬਾ ਸਚੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਕਲਮਾ ਕਰਮ ਨਿਵਾਜ॥
 ਤਸਬੀ ਸਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵਸੀ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਖੈ ਲਾਜ॥੧॥
 ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ॥
 ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਹਾਮਾ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ॥
 ਗਲੀ ਭਿਸਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਈਐ ਛੁਟੈ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਇ॥
 ਮਾਰਣ ਪਾਹਿ ਹਰਾਮ ਮਹਿ ਹੋਇ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਗਲੀ ਕੂੜੀਈ ਕੂੜੇ ਪਲੈ ਪਾਇ॥੨॥
 ਪੰਜਿ ਨਿਵਾਜਾ ਵਖਤ ਪੰਜਿ ਪੰਜਾ ਪੰਜੇ ਨਾਉ॥
 ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਚੁ ਹਲਾਲ ਦੁਇ ਤੀਜਾ ਖੈਰ ਖੁਦਾਇ॥
 ਚਉਥੀ ਨੀਅਤਿ ਰਾਸਿ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਜਵੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਨਾਇ॥
 ਕਰਣੀ ਕਲਮਾ ਆਖਿ ਕੈ ਤਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਸਦਾਇ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇਤੇ ਕੁਤਿਆਰ ਕੁਤੈ ਕੁਤੀ ਪਾਇ॥੩॥

(Make thy mosque of love of humanity;
Thy prayer-carpet of sincerity;
Thy *Quran* of honest and approved endeavour;
Thy circumcision of modesty;
Thy *Ramazan* fast of noble conduct;
Thus shalt thou be a true Muslim.
Make good deeds thy *Kaba*;
Truthfulness thy preceptor;
Thy *namaz* and *kalima* pure actions;
Thy rosary what pleases God--
Thus wilt thou be honoured at the last reckoning.
Five are the prayers, five the hours to perform them,
Five their different names;
What are the true prayers?
The first is truthfulness, the second honest endeavour;
The third prayer offered to God for good of all;
The fourth is a sincere heart;
The fifth, Divine laudation;
One whose *kalima* is good actions, is alone a true Muslim.
Saith Nanak; All who are false within, in the end prove of no worth).

Ibid., pp. 140-41.

6. Gurbachan Singh Talib, 'Guru Nanak and National Integration', in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. XI, No. I, Feb., 1984, p. 9.

7. ਰਾਹ ਦੇਵੈ ਇਕੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ ਸਿਝਸੀ॥
ਕੁਫਰ ਗੋਅ ਕੁਫਰਾਣੈ ਪਇਆ ਦਝਸੀ॥
ਸਭ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੁਬਹਾਨੁ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਈਐ॥
ਸਿਝੈ ਦਰਿ ਦੀਵਾਨਿ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਈਐ॥

(He who knows the two paths to be one,
shall alone find fulfilment.
One who repudiates this faith must burn in hellfire.
The whole universe is Divine in essence.
Merge yourself into Truth).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 142.

8. Kapur Singh, *Parasharaprasna*, (First-edition Hind Publishers Ltd.

Jalandhar 1959), Revised Edition, Eds, Piar Singh and Madanjit Kaur, G.N.D.U. Amritsar, 1988, Introduction.

9. It is a characteristic expression of Guru Nanak which recurs many times in his *bani*. In the beginning of the *Mul Muntra* stands the figure 1 and Sikh tradition is unanimous in accepting 'Ek Onkar' as a declaration of unity of God. This concept of unity of God is strongly emphasised in the hymns of Guru Nanak. In the very opening lines of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the Ultimate Reality is explicitly described by the Guru as:

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

(He is the sole Supreme Being; of eternal manifestation; Creator, Immanent Reality; Without Fear; Without Rancour; Timeless; Formless, Unincarnated; Self-Existent; Realized by grace of the holy preceptor).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1.

Again:

ਛਿਅ ਘਰ ਛਿਅ ਗੁਰ ਛਿਅ ਉਪਦੇਸ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਵੇਸ ਅਨੇਕ॥

(There are six systems of philosophy (Indian), six *gurus*, and six patterns of instruction, but the Guru of these gurus is one though, His manifestation be many).

Ibid., p. 357.

10. ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਬਿਸਨੁ ਮਹੇਸ਼ ਇਕ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਾਰੀ॥

(The Lord is manifest in the three worlds. He is the eternal giver and there is no other).

Ibid., p. 908.

Again :

ਕਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ॥

(My Master is one,

He is the one.

He alone is and there is no other).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 903.

OR

ਤੁਧੁ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ॥ ਸਿਰੇ ਸਿਰਿ ਧੰਧੇ ਲਾਇਆ॥

(You have created the world and fixed tasks for each and everyone).

Ibid., p. 71.

11. There are only two references to Jains in the *bani* of Guru Nanak i.e. 'Var

Majh', and 'Var Malar Ki' (*Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 149-50 and 1258). Both the references direct a vigorous attack against Jain beliefs and practices.

12. *Ibid.*
13. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 1290-91.
14. The Nath Yogis belong to an ascetic groups of Shaivism. The Nath Yogis are directly connected with Pashupata (Lord Shiva). This group includes the *Kanphata Yogis* and various other sub-sects all claiming allegiance to Gorakhnath. In all these Nath traditions there is emphasis on the combination of male and female energies. Shiva and Shakti, *Linga* and *Yoni*, Pursha and Prakarti etc. The Yogi groups are also noted for their wild, erotic and abhorrent practices and blood sacrifices. They follow the tradition of *Hath Yoga* in order to gain miraculous physical and psychical powers. A *Nath* has no social responsibility. He will not earn his living but would beg for his food. In short Nathism is a mysticism of rest, merger or inactivity. Its ethics, methodology, discipline and goal presents a world-view of life-negation.
15. Guru Nanak himself explicitly rejected Nath beliefs (*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 730) and his works bear clear witness to open controversy with Nath Yogis:

ਜੋਗੁ ਨਾ ਖਿੰਬਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਡੰਡੈ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਭਸਮ ਚੜਾਈਐ॥
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਮੁੰਦੀ-ਮੂੰਡਿ ਮੁਡਾਇਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਸਿੰਛੀ ਵਾਈਐ॥
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੧॥
 ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ॥ ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਮੜੀ ਸਮਾਈ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤਾੜੀ ਲਾਈਐ॥
 ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਦੇਸਿ ਦਿਸੰਤਰ ਭਵਿਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਈਐ
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੨॥
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟੈ ਤਾ ਸਹਸਾ ਤੂਟੈ ਧਾਵਤੁ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਈਐ॥
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥੩॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਵਤਿਆ ਮਰਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਐਸਾ ਜੋਗੁ ਕਮਾਈਐ॥
 ਵਾਜੇ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਸਿੰਛੀ ਵਾਜੈ ਤਉ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥
 ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਉ ਪਾਈਐ॥੪॥

16. Yoga has numerous varieties from Patanjali's commendation of the practice of self-discipline to the *Pranayam* (or breath control) or *Hatha Yoga* with the entire mystique of arousing the *Kundalini* and six *chakras* (lotuses) and attainment of miraculous powers (*Riddhi* and *Siddhi*) and entering into the state of *Maha-ananada* (supreme bliss) and the state of *samadhi* (absorption into the Absolute). Others aspects of *Yoga* are

Shakta cult, with certain kinds of reprobate actions associated with it, commonly known as *Vam marga* the left path.

17. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation), Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1984, Vol. I, Introduction, p. lxxvi.

18. ਨਿਵਲੀ ਕਰਮ ਭੁਅੰਗਮ ਭਾਠੀ ਰੇਚਕ ਪੂਰਕ ਕੁੰਭ ਕਰੈ॥

ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਿਛੁ ਸੋਝੀ ਨਾਹੀ ਭਰਮੇ ਭੂਲਾ ਬੁਝਿ ਮਰੈ॥

ਅੰਧਾ ਭਰਿਆ ਭਰਿ ਭਰਿ ਧੋਵੈ ਅੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਮਲੁ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਲਹੈ॥

ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਫੋਕਟ ਸਭਿ ਕਰਮਾ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਜੀਗਰੁ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲੈ॥

(One who engages in ritual cleansing of the intestines, kindling the furnace of *Kundalini*, and directs the passage of breath-

Is, in the absence of guidance from the holy Preceptor, in error;

And gripped in doubts he is ruined.

Blind and covered with the filth of ignorance--

However much he may try to clean himself.

His mind not yet purified.

Without devotion to the holy Name all ritual is husk, deluding man like juggler's tricks).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1343.

19. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, (Eng. Tr.) Introduction, p. lxxvi.

20. Daljeet Singh, *The Sikh Ideology*, Guru Nanak Foundation, New Delhi, 1984, p. 66.

21. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, (Eng. Tr.), Introduction, p. lxxi.

22. ਜੋਗੀ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜਟਾ ਬਿਭੂਤੁ॥ ਆਗੈ ਪਾਛੈ ਰੋਵਹਿ ਪੂਤੁ॥

ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ॥ ਕਿਤੁ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਛਾਈ ਪਾਈ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਲਿ ਕਾ ਏਹੁ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥ ਆਪੇ ਆਖਣੁ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੁ॥

(Yogis and householders smear their mated locks with ashes, while their children are wailing all round them for lack of support. By neglecting the true way of life is not *yoga* attained. What good throwing ashes over one's own head? Saith Nanak: Such is the measure of Kali-Yuga. Each one is himself the spokesman and Judge).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 951.

23. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, (In English Translation), p. lxxi.

24. ਐਸੀ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਜੋਗ ਕਉ ਪਾਲੇ॥ ਆਪਿ ਤਰੈ ਸਗਲੇ ਕੁਲ ਤਾਰੇ॥

ਸੋ ਅਉਧੁਤੁ ਐਸੀ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਵੈ॥ ਅਹਨਿਸਿ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਸਮਾਪਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 877.

25. W.H. Mcleod, *Guru Nanak and the Sikh Religion*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1968, p. 157.
26. According to Mcleod like Kabir, Guru Nanak reinterpreted the 'Sant inheritance' in the light of his own personality and experience (*Ibid.*).
27. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
28. In Vaishnava *bhakti* the essential religious response was of love. This love was directed to one of the *avtars* of Lord Vishnu.
29. Daljeet Singh, *Essays on the Authenticity of Kartarpuri Bir and the Integrated Logic and Unity of Sikhism*, Punjabi University Patiala, *Ibid.*, p. 97, 1981 pp. 67, 94, 95, 96 and 98.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
31. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1293.
32. ਸੋ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੋਨੀ॥
(A hundred curses on the mouth who holds and declares that God incarnates).
Ibid., p. 1136.
33. Guru Nanak affirms:
ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਹੁ॥
ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ॥
(Sow thyself the seed, consume the produce thereof).
Ibid., p. 4.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 930.
35. Guru Nanak affirms:
ਧੋਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੁ॥
ਸੰਤੋਖ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਸੁਤਿ॥
(The Bull of Righteousness is born of compassion).
Ibid., p. 3.
36. Guru Nanak said:
ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ॥
(A thousand and hundred thousand feats of intellect shall not accompany man in the hereafter).
Ibid., p. 1.
37. Guru Nanak affirms:
ਭੈ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਤਰੁ ਭਵਜਲੁ ਮਨਾ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣੀ॥
ਹਰਿਨਾਮੁ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਾਵਨੁ ਇਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਤਉ ਸਰਣੀ॥

(One that practised loving devotion and seeks to be known as one of the lowly-Saith Nanak, liberation shall attain).

Ibid., pp. 505-506.

38. Guru Nanak said:

ਵਿਣੁ ਗੁਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥

(Without performing meritorious deeds no *bhakti* can be attained).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 4.

39. In 'Japuji' *pauri* 34 (*Guru Granth Sahib*), the earth has been called 'Dharamsal' (place or field of righteousness) on which man is to engage in righteous action and not to retire in the world of self-imposed idleness. The closing line of the *saloka* of 'Japuji' also affirms this view.

40. Guru Nanak affirms:

ਦੇਵੈ ਤਰਫਾ ਉਪਾਇ ਇਕੁ ਵਰਤਿਆ॥

ਬੇਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਰਤਾਇ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਵਾਦੁ ਘਤਿਆ॥

ਪਰਵਰਤਿ ਨਿਰਵਰਤਿ ਹਾਠਾ ਦੇਵੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਰੈਬਾਰਿਆ॥

(The creator is sole Himself, having created the two states.

In Veda-utterances is introduced controversy.

Involvement with the world and renunciation are the extremes;

In between operates righteousness that is the guide).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1280.

41. On the heroic theme of martyrdom Guru Nanak says:

ਮਰਣੁ ਨ ਮੰਦਾ ਲੋਕਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜੇ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਐਸਾ ਕੋਇ॥

ਸੇਵਿਹੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੰਮ੍ਰਿਧੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੰਥੁ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ਆਗੈ ਹੋਇ॥

ਪੰਥਿ ਸੁਹੇਲੈ ਜਾਵਹੁ ਤਾਂ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ ਆਗੈ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਡਾਈ ਹੋਇ॥

ਭੇਟੈ ਸਿਉ ਜਾਵਹੁ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਵਹੁ ਤਾਂ ਪਤਿ ਲੇਖੈ ਪਾਈ॥

ਮਹਲੀ ਜਾਇ ਪਾਵਹੁ ਖਸਮੈ ਭਾਵਹੁ ਰੰਗੁ ਸਿਉ ਰਲੀਆ ਮਾਣੈ॥

ਮਰਣੁ ਨ ਮੰਦਾ ਲੋਕਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ॥

(Blessed is the death of those heroic men, who lay down their lives in an approved cause).

Ibid., p. 579.

Again:

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੋਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ॥

ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ॥

(Should thy heart be filled with the passion of love for God.

Step into this path with thy head placed on thy palm.

He who treads this path, Must prepare to give up life without demur).

Ibid., p. 1412.

42. W. Owen Cole, *Sikhism and its Indian Context 1469-1708*, D.K. Agencies (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1984, p. 275.
43. Mcleod, *Op. cit.*, p. 159.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
46. W. Owen Cole, *op.cit.*, p. 275.
47. *Ibid.*
48. *Ibid.*, p. 277.
49. Kapur Singh, 'Guru Nanak the Founder of a World Religion', *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol. II. No. I, Feb. 1975, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, p. 10.
50. Guru Nanak himself refers to this spiritual assignment as:
ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ॥
(I, a jobless minstrel, was assigned a rewarding task).
Guru Granth Sahib, p. 150.
51. ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ॥
(For one, who practiseth Truth, there is only one religion).
Ibid., p. 1188.
52. Narain Singh, *Guru Nanak Dev's view of Life, Amplified*, Publisher, Bhagat Puran Singh, All India Pingalwara Society, Amritsar. n.d., p. 22.
53. Even the myth of Emperor Akbar's universal religion (out of combination of Hinduism and Islam), i.e. Din-i-Ilahi has been explored long ago by the researchers though it still survives in text Books on Indian History.
54. See Sunita Puri, *Advent of Sikh Religion: A Socio-Political Perspective*, Pub. Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1993, Preface, pp. Xiv-Xv.
55. Attar Singh, "Guru Nanak's Vision of Religious Humanism" in *Studies in Sikhism and Comparative Religion*, Vol. I., Oct. 1982, Guru Nanak Foundation, New Delhi, p. 20.

GURU NANAK'S VISION OF RELIGIOUS HUMANISM

Attar Singh

It is quite and even meaningfully remarkable that the Sikh tradition's own internal perspective on the emergence and evolution in history of the Sikh faith should have attracted only scant consideration as against all sorts of controversies over the external alternatives to the former. Grouped whether on the basis of their categorization of the structural features of Sikhism as additive, syncretic or eclectic on the one hand¹, and schismatic on the other², or according to the emphasis on, "the features which Sikhism so patently shares with other religious traditions in India," as either of Hindu³ or Islamic⁴ origin and orientation in its responses to the human condition and the mystical and moral quest of man all these approaches are agreed in one thing; they all are equally if ever so subtly and non- chalantly reluctant to admit Sikhism's claims to any organic integrity. It should, of course, be quite interesting indeed to define and examine the ideological predilections of the protagonists of these different approaches to Sikhism. However for the limited purpose of the present study, the exercise may prove to be much of a scholastic, even intellectual luxury. Suffice it to say that the insights made available by the alternative perspectives, though not altogether unwelcome, can become meaningful only if these could be made to reconcile and cohere with some self dependent frame of reference . For this a fall back upon the Sikh tradition, to say the least, is unavoidable.

As a point of departure it will be helpful to start with the line of argument developed by Kenneth W. Jones,⁵ to emphasize the

differentiation in the religious situation of Punjab in the context of the emergence of Sikhism, defined by him as a prophetic religion which begins, according to him, out of a parent religion whether evolutionary or prophetic, "with a prophet and his message" and which, if successful, gradually splits off from the parent religion and ultimately develops a separate set of ritual and sense of identity of its own and derives authority from a new text or texts. The membership of a prophetic faith is not ascriptive, that is by birth, but by conversion through proselytization. The evolutionary religions, in which category Kenneth W. Jones places Hinduism both by itself and as the parent religion alike of Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, are characterized as those systems of belief which have no definite beginning in time, have no founding prophets and grow with the social and cultural systems of a particular people.

To this quite practical and useful differentiation especially between Sikhism and Hinduism which draws pointed attention to the distinct identity of the former, one may also add another dimension; that of religious and historical configuration in which Sikhism stood vis-a-vis its parent faith: Hinduism and the alien, even though another prophetic religion: Islam. As a matter of fact that latter element of configuration is of far greater import because it projects the individual identity of Sikhism in a still sharper focus. Moreover, as against other similar, though not quite identical, movements in medieval India of *Bhakti* and *sant* cults within Hinduism and Sufism in Islam it is Sikhism alone which instead of seeking accommodation either within its parent religion, i.e. Hinduism or within the conquering faith, i.e. Islam, chose to protest against both of them, revolt against the former and confront the later. It is in this revolutionary configuration of protest, revolt and confrontation that the inner urges and aspirations of Sikhism sought and achieved their basic articulation not only mystically and metaphysically but even historically. The first ever interpretation of Sikhism from within the faith was undertaken by no less a person than Bhai Gurdas, whose works were canonized by the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev, as the "key of the

Guru Granth." While developing the social and religious background to the sacred ministry of Guru Nanak in Var I, Bhai Gurdas gives a lucid account of the inter religious rivalries and conflicts between Hinduism and Islam⁶, religious persecution of non-Muslims by the theocratic State⁷, and sectarian fragmentation and atomisation of the Indian society⁸. His allusions to the alienation of man from an authoritarian State structure and corrupt and perverse religious practices⁹ carry a deep imprint of Guru Nanak's own observations. In a way the ideological position attributed to Guru Nanak by Bhai Gurdas posits the idea of judging man not by his avowed faith but by his actions. When Guru Nanak is questioned by the Qazis and Mullahs during his visit to Mecca as to the comparative merits of Hinduism and Islam, he replies that both are doomed for their neglect of truthful actions.¹⁰

The *Janam Sakhis*, even though greatly discounted by some of the scholars as dependable historical evidence have the undisputed merit of concretising through narratives and illustrations the inner core of the Sikh position on the conflict between the outer forms and the inner content of both the great faiths. In a more direct and vigorous manner, Guru Gobind Singh, in the preface to *Bachitra Natak*, assimilated the element of the Sikh configuration vis-a-vis Hinduism and Islam to a singular Philosophy of Religious Evolution of man¹¹. The *raison detre* of Sikhism emerging in the given historical context of unresolved contradiction between Hinduism and Islam, as the third path inheres in Guru Gobind Singh's vision in the need for redeeming the essential belief and faith in God from the devitalising perversions of the faiths by their exponents and followers. Here he gives a beautiful image of a tree being burnt up with its own leaves, indicating the process of the negation of the faiths by their own followers.¹²

This is then the crux of the problem, that the Sikh tradition has always tried to visualize Sikhism as a faith in contradistinction both from

Hinduism and Islam and not as the continuity of one or the offshoot of the other. Sikhs were conceived as protestant believers and their faith derived as much vitality from a passionate belief in the existence of God as from their faith that God had to be related to the human condition and the total historic milieu that shaped it.

The psycho-social relevance of the teachings of Guru Nanak is rooted in his sensitivity to the historical fact of the Islamic State as an agent of the process of alienation of man both from his own spiritual identity and the new oppressive discriminatory system of theocracy as also a coercive orthodoxy of traditionalism and formalism. In a number of incisive references superimposition on the Indian culture of the Muslim cultural patterns and the willing subservience to those of the Hindus, Guru Nanak invites repeated attention to the element of decadence which is hallmark of any tradition that does not admit of the necessity of preserving and strengthening its internal core of values against the debilitating and coercive influence of ritualism and formalism. But above all, Guru Nanak was concerned by the process of dehumanisation both of the oppressive over-lords whether temporal or religious and the oppressed multitudes ignorant as much of their divine ancestry as of their spiritual destiny. The starting point in this whole process is Guru Nanak's ironical denunciation of the psychology of surrender both physical and cultural with which the people accepted the ascendancy of the conquering faith forcibly imposed upon them.

There are three expressions of the element of coercion involved in this situation all of which in their own different ways partake of the denial and surrender of the most vital element of human consciousness: human integrity. Firstly, the ascendancy of Islam, which Guru Nanak obviously presents, is involved in *Allah*, *Khuda*, and *Rahman*¹³ becoming prevalent as the names of God and enforcement of the sacred books of Islam in place of the traditional Hindu or non-Islamic texts.¹⁴ Secondly, it finds expression in the imposition of levies on the places of

Hindu worship, the worshippers and the gods which was symptomatic of the inferior status assigned to the Hindus in the new scheme of things.¹⁵ Thirdly, it leads to the element of hypocrisy of those Hindus who while adhering to their rituals had in fact become collaborators of the alien Masters even in the matter of serving them, for the implementation of coercive measures against their coreligionists.¹⁶ In all these instances can be perceived the deep anguish of Guru Nanak at the devaluation of man and human reality at the hands of deadening formalisms and the absence of resistance to the forcible change and conversion on the part of the victims. Another important detail of Guru Nanak's realisation of the state of alienation both of the individual and that of the social groups is provided by his denunciation of the kings and their minions as butchers and confining them to the realm of predatory animals with whom no human communication was possible.¹⁷

To revitalize a defeated and demoralised people, victim alike of an "alien and continuously alienating, theocratic state", and corrupt and deprived priestly class, Guru Nanak deliberately tried to enlarge the reality of man by divesting the king and the priest of their usurped glory; the king as the agency for interpretation and enforcement of God's will and the priest as the mediator between the profane and the sacred. Here it must be remembered that Guru Nanak portrays both as utterly lacking in any dignity and grace which should attach to them in case they were accepted as reflection of God on earth. On the contrary, their portrayal by Guru Nanak emphasises the facts of their avarice¹⁸, corruptibility¹⁹, moral depravity²⁰, the transitory nature of their power and glory²¹ and their consequent degradation which all bring out in bold relief their human and hence non-mysterious and non-divine character.

The fact of the matter is that Guru Nanak, concerned as he was with the redemption of the human situation was acutely sensitive to the sense of religious awe concomitant to the projection, by the contemporary ideology of the kings and priests as the reflection or the

agents of God. In order to make man aware of his inherent divinity, it was necessary to lift the pervasive sense of religious awe and political terror that characterised the medieval Indian religious ethos. Guru Nanak did precisely that by demonstrating that kings and priests were in no way superior to a common man. If anything they were less than men; it was for all their inhuman pre-occupations. Having failed in discharging their ordained obligations they had debased themselves beyond any hope of redemption. The potent characteristic of fearlessness, recognised by Guru Nanak as one of the divine attributes, held forth freedom from fear as the primary goal for man and hence was an essential stage on the way to perfection, the *summum bonum* of all spiritual endeavour. Thus Guru Nanak envisaged a new man not only free from fear but also aware of his indwelling divinity which amongst other things also meant creative originality. While the freedom from fear of the kings demanded and begot the daring to change the political order, the negation of the fear of the priests delivered man from bondage to traditionalism, to irrelevant gods and their incarnations, and the esoteric rituals which had been reduced to mechanical devices for framing existential worries and concerns of man.

According to Guenter Lewy "Ancient and medieval Indian political thought considered man to be inherently evil and sinful, and kingship instituted by divine decree, was the consequence of and remedy for man's imperfection. Only the ruler could preserve the social system and prevent total ruin. Political thought emphasized order and cautioned against disturbing tradition and established institutions. It stressed the discharge of duties in stratified social order, and it was centered around the concept of civil obligation."²²

It is quite significant that Guru Nanak, instead of projecting the kings and the oppressive political and administrative structure designed by them as established by the divine decree, should have found them as evil with which there could not be any scope of reconciliation. That this departure from the prevalent ideology had in itself seeds of political

revolution became evident in the later developments demonstrates the dynamism of Guru Nanak's outlook on world and life. A still more remarkable feature of this understanding of the human situation lies in this, that Guru Nanak should perceive in this scheme of things a factor inducing dehumanisation as much of the oppressive masters as of the hapless masses whom he described as blind and ignorant, who had been rendered dead in soul.²³

All these aspects of alienation, coercion, religious persecution and abject submission of the common men and women to the tyranny are further emphasized in the well known *Babar Bani* verses which constitute a vivid testimony to the violence of the times in which Guru Nanak lived and realised his vision. It will even be quite permissible to say that the tragedy of man with which Guru Nanak was concerned comes out all the more dramatically and poignantly in these verses. Here again the hoards of Babur, the Mughal conqueror, are described as the marriage procession of evil demanding forcibly the hand of the helpless bride, that is India.²⁴

On a par with Guru Nanak's preception of the theocratic structure of the state as evil in all parts, he visualizes the empty rituals which had assumed a virtual autonomy of their own unrelated to any inner spiritual content that these might have originally enshrined and the entire priestly class of whatsoever denominational faith, sect or cult presiding over them as another form of evil to which man was made subject.

The human crisis according to Guru Nanak was the outcome of the disintegration of human personality due to the divorce of the outer form from the inner content and adherence to the former at the cost of the latter. He is unrelenting in his exposure of this phenomenon as an unmistakable part of his contemporary religious scene. No aspect of the reversal of human consciousness and endeavour from the allegiance to the universal human values to the adherence to the outer forms in any

religious faith of his times be it Hinduism, Jainism, Islam or the later day cults of Buddhism such as *Nathas*, *Jogis* and *Sidhas* could escape his hard look. Here it will be interesting to recall his exhortations to the followers of all the faiths for a return to the essential simplicity of man's faith in God and commitment to the truth, freedom and integration, psychological, social and mystical so as to reinvest the religious symbols or practices of their faiths with a new inner life.

Several commentators of Sikh faith have seen in Guru Nanak a kindered soul of the Sufis of Islam and the *bhaktas* and saints of the Hindu faith. Dr. J.S. Grewal even suggests that the idiom of Guru Nanak's denunciation of particularism and ritualism at least of the Islam is akin to that of the Sufi mystics. A similar assertion can be made in respect of the same trends in Hinduism which come in for equal, if not greater, condemnation by him in the same vein as that of the Hindu *bhaktas* and saints. But the crucial point which is not appreciated is that while Guru Nanak goes along with the Sufis and the *bhaktas* to a certain length, he ultimately reaches past both of them when he demands a new praxis both, individual and social, to make a bid for changing what was dead and rotten.

Guru Nanak's religious quest starts appropriately with man and human condition in both, the necessary and the contingent eternal and the temporal contexts. In the beginning of *Asa di Var* Guru Nanak gives a succinct description of the man's religious endeavour as transformation of man into God. This introduces the first dynamic principle of Sikh thought which envisages not only a future for man but also the prospect of a spiritual elevation while retaining his identity as man.²⁵

In this respect it will be pertinent to remember that for Guru Nanak the individual personality and consciousness emerge out of the divine light and the divine light reveals itself through the individuals.²⁶ Thus for Guru Nanak man signifies the meeting place of the physical

actuality and spiritual possibility.²⁷ In another manner of highlighting the same truth Guru Nanak defies human ego as the source both of hell and heaven, of nobility and debasement.²⁸ Another interesting consequence of this doctrine lies in the acceptance of all the facets of human life as diverse revelations of the divine immanence.²⁹ From such investment of the variety of life and the variations of cultural identities with divinity, it is only a small step towards the ideology of cultural and even political pluralism as a prior condition for a sane social order as argued by Kapur Singh most lucidly in *Parasharprasna*³⁰ and *Sachi Sakhi*.³¹

Hew McLeod obviously hits upon the right point when he defines Guru Nanak's concept of human condition as being that of the unregenerate man. This is helpful also in working out Guru Nanak's idea of theodicy. Evil in Guru Nanak's framework is not inbuilt in the human situation *per se*. Man is not sinful by nature. Guru Nanak envisions evil in three major aspects: falsehood, alienation from God and bondage to self. It also manifests itself as a factor which checkmates the regenerative processes through which man acquires truth, integration and freedom and ultimately his spiritual identity. These regenerative processes come into play when man is awakened out of his ignorance of his divine origin. Such an awakened soul is led on from gnosis i.e. knowledge of God to personal and social *praxis* i.e. action as an agent of God in history. The highest category in Sikh faith is, of course, that of God who is the eternal truth but the man's goal is set by Guru Nanak beyond the knowledge of God in active, personal and social action towards truthful behaviour i.e. the personal and social action through which man reveals and makes manifest his spiritual essence and divine creativity. This dynamic concept of man not only marked a bold departure from the then prevalent theories of human debasement but also held forth the concept of man's creative efflorescence as against extant philosophies of mystical self-annihilation.³² In Guru Nanak's faith vital question is not that of man losing his identity in God but that of God's awakening within man.

An important detail of this new man of Guru Nanak relates to his concept of salvation which did not mean extinction of human consciousness and personality through dissolution into God but return to the world in the transformed state of active selflessness and service to others. This provided the second dynamic principle of Sikh faith, that of a striving for human solidarity. Combined with the first dynamic principle that of the man's inherent capacity for a spiritual redemption through self awareness and struggle and second principle of human solidarity worked for reintegrating the atomised and fragmented Indian society thanks to the distinctions of caste, creed and birth. It will be seen that in both the processes the major thrust is provided by identification of man with God, firstly in realising the presence of God in one's own soul and secondly, by perceiving it in others. Thereby, Guru Nanak was able to relate God to human situation not in the passive manner of asceticism or mystical experience nor by investing man's life on earth with an autonomous status and deifying the purely materialist pursuit. Guru Nanak's path lay in the acceptance of the reality of man on a par with that of God and then in relating one to the other. It is in this background that Guru Nanak's assertion that both indulgence and renunciation are two extremes and the *Dharma* lies in mediating between the two of them becomes meaningful.³³

Still further Guru Nanak while acutely aware of man's only too well known human failings of spiritual and moral slothfulness and other infirmities of flesh and blood refused to reconcile with the idea of the lack of concern of God for the pitiable condition of man. On the other hand he believes God to be accountable for the plight of man. He not only questioned the idea of a God not pained by the wails and lamentations of a suffering humanity³⁴ but also remonstrated with Him for his anger towards men and women who were but his own children.³⁵ This is why he takes recourse to the idea of Divine Grace as a factor in redeeming human condition and leading man out of his predicament. But above all Guru Nanak believes in God arising out of the soul of man rather than descending from the heavens on high.

Another direction in which the meeting ground between man and God was located by Guru Nanak is revealed by implicit rejection by him of the theological claims of finality of revelation on behalf of any particular faith or denomination and the concept of any particular people as the chosen, i.e. theologically privileged people. The reference above to the elements of protest, revolt or confrontation against other religious traditions in Guru Nanak's teachings are directed not against any particular approach to God but against the distortion by the followers of their respective faiths through their subordination to narrow personal or group interests. Guru Nanak's demand from the followers of different faiths is not to discard them but only to adhere, in practical ways, to the essential vision and values of those faiths. Here again, we find open acceptance of cultural pluralism in the vision of mutual accommodation between different faiths on an equal footing. This anti-particularist thrust of the teachings of Guru Nanak in the medieval Indian setting proved to be a potent force for challenging the theories of religious conformism on the one hand and those of conventionalism on the other thus broadening the human vistas.

Guru Nanak not only entered into dialogue with the religious faiths of his times but also sought to promote an active element of understanding and self-examination in each faith so as to help to re-awaken their inner spirit. Thus Guru Nanak can be perceived as anticipating the modern times in which stress has shifted from conflict between different faiths towards exploring the possibility of dialogue between them so as to recognise and understand each faith in its own setting and in accordance with its inner light. In a very vital sense Guru Nanak's concept of man also implied the freedom of conscience by which the modern societies lay great store.

To conclude, I cannot do better than inviting attention to the two conflicting images through which Guru Nanak perceived the eternal contradiction on the affairs of man. I have in mind the images of a

sparrow soaring high in the sky and the massively lethargic and lustful elephant wantonly lolling in the dust and wasting himself in his bondage to his own being. If one were to pursue the image of the singing birds and sparrows in its course through Sikh history one will find the meek sparrows ultimately overwhelming and defeating the hawks. The liberated man of Guru Nanak strives from a passive, spatial state of fragmented and corporeal existence towards the active-state of spiritual and integrative essence. While Guru Nanak negated all contradictions between man and man based upon distinctions of caste, birth or faith he developed a new distinction between the self-absorbed and the self-transcending people. With his intense faith in God he upheld self-transcendence of the awakened man as the only meaningful pursuit of man.

Notes and References

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12. *Ibid.*
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MOTIVATIONS FOR NAAM SIMRAN: THE SIKH WAY OF MEDITATION

Bhai Harbans Lal

What Should Not You Seek

It is a common observation that many seekers take on meditation with a purely materialistic outlook on life. Some wish to start it as an exercise so that their heart may beat slower and it may function for many more years, that the digestive and eliminative organs function in a more comforting mode, or that their senility may be postponed. Others wish that there be a victory in a criminal or a tax evasion case, that the cheque books show ever increasing balance, that their business may produce much more profit, and that the business of their neighbours be doomed. Still others desire a spiritual or occult power in order to enjoy greater harmony in life, enjoy more and better earthly things, and to catch bigger and better fish in the nets. All of these seekers of meditation go on believing that fulfillment can be found in the materialistic world, money brings satisfaction, fame is the answer to their depression, or that fulfillment lies in good health. The purpose of this discussion is to stress that one can never really benefit from meditation so long as one continues to seek it for the purpose of demonstrating its worldly potency, that is, to gain occult or physical powers, or to achieve materialistic gains. Any exercise of meditation to possess an automobile, more money, or a better position at work or in society will only strengthen the grip of illusions and as such will be poisonous to any spiritual life:

Without the wealth of (Lord's) Name consider all other riches as poisons.¹

The Guru tells us that only those will succeed on their spiritual journey whom do materialistic desires not touch :

The one who is not affected by greed, the love of illusions,
the service of evil, and, affects of pain or pleasure,
is the embodiment of God.²

Meditation is for the purpose of realizing God consciousness. Through meditation God's kingdom is revealed. God is realized as the apotheosis of all good. In achieving the experience of God, our problems of human life are also resolved but only as a tangible. However, we are distracted to a wrong path if we desire to gain anything material that is separate and apart from Divinity. Any attempt of meditation that has within itself any trace of desire to get something other than God's gift of meditation, or to acquire something other than love for meditation is no longer the meditation. Rather it is a means to further strengthen the grip of our animal instincts. The Guru says:

O my mind, those who forsake *naam* and take to the duality fall
into the grip of the angel of death.³

Only by contemplating on the Lord's Name one is emancipated
and the rest is but a vain prattle.⁴

If resolution of materialistic agenda is not the purpose of meditation, should we postpone the spiritual journey until those agendas are completed. Desire for meditation can not be postponed until our materialistic problems are resolved. Often we say: "If only this pain could be stopped, then I really could begin the practice of meditation. I can't do it while I am in such a pain." "If I can afford a retirement sooner, I could devote more time to meditation", or "if only my children get married, I could be free and at peace and would be able to commit to meditation." In other words, people infer that the drive for meditation is hindered by some physical, social or financial condition. Evidence is

to the contrary. For example, those who do not undertake meditation in youth often do not do so when they are old:

One who enjoys not his union with God in youth,
rarely does one so in old age.

So, get in relationship with your God right now,
and turn a new leaf in your life!⁵

There are people with millions of dollars who have not discovered divine consciousness; there are people in perfect health, or enjoying highest glory of public acclaim who have neither known spirituality, nor have they found peace or fulfilment. Therefore, the Guru poses this question to answer our riddle:

How shall I be in joy, O my sibling? How shall I find the Lord, the mainspring of my life? Due to the love of *Maya*, my mind is not at peace, and my high mansions are just a beautiful shadow. In vain have I wasted my life in greed. I am exulted at the sight of the horses, the elephants, the gathering of the armies and the royal assistants. (But) they are like a noose of vanity around my neck. One may have sway over the entire world, may revel in all kinds of joy, and enjoy many sensuous women. In actuality, this person is like a king turned beggar in a dream. The True Guru showed me the way to bliss. Whatever the Lord does must be pleasing to God's devotees. Stilling one's ego, one merges in the Real. Thus is the Bliss attained, O my sibling. Thus is experienced the Divine, the supporter of all.⁶

Whatever is achieved without the touch of God will not be right for us and it is the life experience of meditation of God's Name that makes one realize:

Says Nanak, as God wills, God makes things right.

Without the Name, no one will receive approval.⁷

We must be aware that when most of us start on the spiritual path, our state of consciousness is materialistic. Only on the path of *Gurmat*, the Guru's way to God, we are trained to reverse the picture. Then we begin to inculcate the meditation in our heart instead; and in the process of meditation, we see the desire for material goods, or relief from the worldly pains to disappear; lust, greed and urge to worldly fulfilment vanish. In the composition of 'Sukhmani', Guru Arjan spoke the following for those who do not know how to stop nurturing their worldly desires:

One, who desires for the four cardinal possessions, should commit oneself to the service of the Saints. If you long to erase your sorrows, you must ever sing the praises of the Lord in your heart. If you seek praises for yourself, learn to forsake ego by joining the society of the holy. If you dread the pangs of birth and death, take refuge of the Saints. One who only seeks the vision of the Lord, Nanak, is sacrifice unto that person.⁸

It is true that when we seek, we receive materialistic benefits from the meditation. Reduction of stress, satisfying relationships with others, healthy body, abundant supply of materials, success in business, and creativity in worldly endeavours, are some of the tangible benefits of achieving the Divine consciousness through meditation. Guru Arjan described the tangibles that were given to him when he practised meditation on God's Name:

I meditate continuously in remembrance of the Lord, and attain harmony; anguish and ailments are dispelled from my body.⁹

However, we must realize that the inner fulfilment must come first before the comforts of this world may be added. When they are achieved, it is without asking, and more importantly, after satiating any hunger for those. We do not ask for or desire for them. Rather, we learn

that asking for anything other than the gift of God's *Naam*, is asking for a pandora box of troubles. The Guru says:

To ask for anything or any body other than You,
 Oh Lord is inviting the most miserable of miseries.
 Kindly bless me with your *Naam*, which is the fulfilment,
 and make me content that way so that may the hunger of my mind
 be satiated.¹⁰

As long as we are merely trying to exchange physical discord for physical harmony, we do not have any concept of what the spiritual riches are, or what the spiritual health is. Therefore, we must begin our meditation with the recognition that neither physical health nor material wealth is the object of our search for Divine. Any desire for things or persons will prevent, or delay our entrance into the spiritual kingdom. Only the steadfast focus on the goal of seeking solely the God-realization will open the way to reaching the higher consciousness. In that consciousness, we will find all things other than experience in divinity to be tasteless, or to be more accurate, we will find all desires within us satiated. When we will no longer search for the satisfaction that the outside world can give, but seek only eternal peace, we will open the gates to the spiritual life. Says Nanak:

One who sings the Lord's Praise will alone be in harmony.

The rest of the world is lured away by illusions and attains not to the state of divine consciousness."¹¹

As a seeker, as we Sikhs are of spiritual wisdom, an important question is what is the motivation for persuasion of our true spirituality? Is there an urge for God-realization, an urge that can be trodden here on earth? Can it be achieved here on earth? Is there any short cut? The answer to all these questions is a yes. Not only there is a way of accomplishing these objectives, but there are short cuts too. One short cut, so simple and yet so very difficult, is to perform a bit of mental surgery on ourselves and reshape our materialistic appetite. Let us take a sharp scalpel and cut out cravings for person, place, thing,

circumstance, or condition. Every craving must be cut away in order that only one remains. It is to reach divine consciousness and to fall in love with it alone. We will reach the life eternal without cutting of any worldly activity. The Guru remarks:

O' the Restorer of what was taken away,
 the Liberator from captivity, the Formless Lord, the Destroyer of pain.
 I do not know about *karma* and good deeds,
 I do not know about *dharma* and righteous living.
 I am so greedy, chasing illusions.
 As I choose to go by the name of God's devotee;
 please, save this honour of yours.¹²

Awakening of Divine within is the main purpose of meditation. Thus, any objective or exercise for material things or persons defeats the purpose of meditation. To experience Divinity itself is the only good that we must seek from our meditation.

To Awaken Divine Within

The only purpose of meditation is to achieve the goal of our human life and that is to awaken our consciousness to Divinity within us. As the exercise of meditation we pray that the purpose for which the human life was bestowed upon us may be fulfilled through the experience of the Divine Light.

It is the nature of the human being to be unaware of God within and to love self-indulgence: riches, desires, animosity, greed, attachment and sensuality. The tendency of self-indulgence operates in our consciousness as agent of the evil to separate us from the Divine consciousness. When beginning on the path of meditation, we must recognize these influences and seek Guru's assistance in over-powering them:

Attractive women lure the soul of the man; emotional attachment to *Maya* is so sweet to him.

His mind has become attached to the pleasures of houses, palaces, horses and other enjoyments.

The Lord God does not enter his thoughts; how can he be saved, O my Lord?

O my Lord, these are my lowly actions, Treasure of Virture.

Merciful Lord, please bless me with your Grace and forgive me for all my mistakes.

I have no charm, no social status and no manners. How shall I show you my face and speak to you?

I have no virtue at all. I have not chanted Your Name. I am a sinner and can be saved only by the Company of the Guru. This will be a boon of the True Guru.¹³

The capacity for thinking of comforts for our pseudo-self is a function of the degree of our sense of separation from Divine. As a matter of fact, this sense of separation is the legacy of humanoid. In meditation we reach a higher consciousness and instantaneously realize that we are not simple human beings, as we believe to be; we are spiritual entities. It is only our human consciousness that is entertaining a sense of separation from God. We cannot be separated from God, but we can entertain such a sense under the influence of illusionary consciousness. By meditation that sense of separation begins to disappear. A metamorphosis takes place wholly within one's self due to the activity of the higher consciousness. The moment one sets one's feet in the direction of the Meditation, one has begun a journey on the spiritual path to self-realization. The Guru assures:

Those who meet the True Lord are not separated again;
they come to dwell in the home of the self deep within.¹⁴

The *gurmukh* is united with the Lord,
while the *manmukh* is separated from Him. The *gurmukh*
reveals the way.¹⁵

Meditation is meant to take us to the stages of spiritual uplift consisting of heightened awareness, expanded consciousness, and the divine wisdom. We meditate to unfold a vast land of eternal beauty within us. We recognize deep within our souls, an awesome mystery of God of which we are a part. *Simran* is a journey towards illumination and the joyous existence in the greater space of inner consciousness. It begins here on earth, in our more loosely defined home. Then it expands all over to the Divine energy. This energy extends to the heavens and the stars, which become like friends, with special messages of God's manifestation. The great message is delivered in the simplest spiritual experience through meditation. It reveals the inter-connected truth. We begin to know deep within that a shift is taking place; we are becoming part of divine energy. We have finally learnt the lessons to arrive at the stage where we are entering into the everlasting fold of God. That is the promise of meditation.

Most people who pretend to follow the path of Meditation are, in actuality, following their humanoid tendencies guided by the evils in their mind.¹⁶ In contrast to these, a few will stand out who have experienced an Inner Light and glory by which they live. This spiritual light is easily detected in them. You see it in their eyes, hear it in their voice, and observe it in their spiritual vitality. You also see and hear the same in *guru's Shabad*. Although this Presence is invisible; it is within the *shabad* and within every person; no one in the world is without it. It is available to everyone who has ears to hear and eyes to see and is receptive to Divine knowledge. The meditation is a path to the Inner Light and to experience it is the only reason for meditation.

Meditation is to enlighten our consciousness. Therefore, only the mind is the appropriate modality to exercise it. It is the *surat* or consciousness with which the meditation ought to be practised. Therein lies the secret. How different that is from any mental gymnastic, making wishes affirming that this or that of this world shall be achieved from meditation. The true attitude with which to enter the path of meditation

is to open our consciousness to the divine presence and let it fill itself. During meditation let the Guru speak His Word to our sub-conscious. We shall find that Word has permeated into our consciousness:

My consciousness has awakened to the Word.

Now I continuously feed my self upon the Lord's Nectar to my fulfillment.¹⁷

Meditation does the work of illumination through the Grace of God, not by your or my wish¹⁸. The true aspirant on the spiritual path has no desire other than the experience of the Divine, the realization of God and the experience of the higher consciousness. The Guru teaches us that there could not possibly remain any unfulfilled need if the Guru's Word is operating in our consciousness. One desire alone is legitimate and that is the realization of meditation activity to implant the Divine Word in our consciousness.

The gift of our discussion is to ask you to leave your nest, and to leave your search for more and better humanoid comforts. Instead, take up meditation and, thus, strive to open your consciousness to the spiritual realities. Many of the things of this world will come your way, but what comes to you in the outer world, will be a bonus of an inner illumination. A state of inner silence, a state of inner awareness and receptivity will only take you to the goal of the fulfillment. Therefore, it is necessary for us to prepare ourselves exclusively for the experience of receiving that enlightenment. This is the purpose of meditation.

In brief, we must realize that we have no purpose of meditation other than the achievement of the Divine consciousness. We have no demonstration to make except that of our spiritual consciousness. This we must do first for our own development and secondly, as a witness to the world that purpose of this life is the Divine Consciousness. And this consciousness may be attained by all those who are ready to give up the world, not by removing themselves to some remote corner, but

by giving up their memes³³ which separate you from the Divine. The Sikh mode of meditation is meant to accomplish that.

For true results of meditation, set your whole heart, soul and mind on the awakening of God rather than any attainment of any form of goods. As we gain that awakening, we enjoy all the good things of life which come forth, without becoming their slaves or becoming attached to them as well as without fear of losing them. No one can ever lose his wealth, health, or life once a person has the touch of the Divinity in the heart.

Self-Orientation is Hindrance

Self-oriented people are the citizens of this Aquarius age who listen to the human consciousness. They are stuck in the duality and are deep in materialistic mud. In their desires they always want that their materiality be made considerably better and richer. Sikh theologian, Bhai Gurdas, describes such a personality as:

Manmukhs, the self-oriented, conduct their life practices under the influence of an evil-consciousness and they suffer on account of their attachment with the duality.¹⁹

Scripture tells us that a self-oriented people can neither indulge in meditation^{19a} nor be recipient of the Divine Word, their indulgence is always in the ego:

The self-oriented people (*manmukhs*) do not know the *Naam*. Without *Naam*, they lose their honour.

They do not savour the *Sabad* and are attached to the love of duality.²⁰

It is because a self-oriented person is possessed with a egoistic and false selfhood, which prevent him/her from knowing the meaning of meditation.

The self-ward egoist knows not the essence of worship²¹

The self-oriented *manmukhs* are unable to meditate;
they are psychotic,
wasting away in their egotism.²²

When we orient to the Guru to seek the skills of meditation, the Guru becomes our advocate and acquaints us with the Divine way:

The Guru united the separated ones with God acting as an intercessor at the God's Court.²³

When the Guru becomes one's intercessor, the ignorance, doubt, and suffering are dispelled.²⁴

All over the boughs are green: but that alone is ripe-sweet which ripens in its own time.

Meet Thou me, O Lord, in the month of *Asuj*:
yea, the Perfect Guru is now my intercessor.²⁵

The lesson is that to practice meditation successfully, we must discard the guidance from our own intuition or from the devil within. Rather, we should hear the Word of the Guru:

Shed thy self-willedness, and hear the Words of Wisdom (of the Lord).²⁶

The self-oriented *manmukh* babbles on and on, but does not comprehend. One whose heart is illumined, by Guru's Teachings, obtains the Name of the Lord.²⁷

Indispensability of Divine Grace

During the posture for Meditation we should find ourselves seated and seeking the Grace of the Guru and God to be our saviours. This Grace is essential to acquire the technique that will produce any outcome of our effort:

The one who is blessed by the Guru's Grace alone knows the

way to fulfillment, says Nanak, that one merges in God, as water mingles with water.²⁸

We must abandon all our previous concepts of our own efforts to bring about the change in our consciousness. We must rise above our humaneness, leave behind all thoughts, people, and activities of the illusory self.²⁹ We should surrender to the Divine for the gift of *Naam*. Let no one consider capable of being on the spiritual path on its own. Were it not for the Grace of God, one would not be reaching out toward Meditation:

Rigorous practice or clever tricks have not worked for me; I shall act according to the instructions of the perfect Guru. Whatever acts he makes us perform constitute the chanting, the intense meditation, austere self-discipline and rituals of purification.³⁰

It is the nature of the human being to love self-indulgence: riches, desires, animosity, greed, attachment and sensuality. These operate in our consciousness as agents of the Devil to separate us from the Divine consciousness. We must recognize these influences and seek Guru's assistance in over-powering them. The Guru says:

Attractive women lure the soul of the man; emotional attachment to *Maya* is so sweet to him. His mind has become attached to the pleasure of houses, palaces, horses and other enjoyments. The Lord God does not enter his thoughts; how can he be saved, O my Lord King? O my Lord, these are my lowly actions, O my Lord. O Lord, Har, Har, Treasure of Virtue, Merciful Lord, please bless me with Your Grace and forgive me for all my mistakes. I have no beauty, no social status, no manners. With what face am I to speak? I have no virtue at all; I have not chanted Your Name. I am a sinner, saved only by the Company of the Guru. This is the Generous Blessing of the True Guru.³¹

The divine grace to meditate is not found in the human intellect, not is it found in such peace as the world can give. Participation in discussions, reading statements or books about Meditation do not bring it forth. These may be of assistance in leading us to a point where we are prepared in the silence to receive the Grace of God, but it is meditation which lifts us to a state of spiritual apprehension where divine grace may be bestowed:

When the Lord extends grace to some one, all doubts vanish and the *Sabad* begins to abide in this seeker's mind. Both body and mind are rendered pure and the Name comes to reside in the consciousness.³²

In the state of meditation the whole purpose of our existence must be made a fitting instrument through which God's glory may be revealed. We shall never fulfill ourselves in meditation by trying to express our individuality, fulfillment lies in letting the Infinite Invisible bring Itself through into expression by His Grace. Here we do not strive and attempt to glorify ourselves, but every time we meditate, we continue to remind ourselves as the Guru said:

It is my prayer to Thee,
Father, make me dwell only upon Thy Name.³³

It is the Grace of God that is a very crucial ingredient in success of meditation and we must continue to pray for that in our meditation posture:

O Lord, bestow Thy Grace on me so that I may dwell on Thy nectar Name.³⁴

When Thou so will, I contemplate Thy Name, and it is Thou alone who blesses me with bliss.³⁵

In our meditation posture we must find ourselves saying:

My Guru, I am here to seek your Grace. I can do nothing on my own. My body, soul and consciousness are not mine. You

bestowed them upon me as an opportunity to realize you. I have no wisdom or ability of my own. I have no understanding; and I have no initiative of my own. I am sitting here as a humble seeker of your blessing so that your infinity may flow through me by your Grace. You have started me on this path through your teachings.³⁶

Under a spell of the falsehood, a self-oriented person undertakes meditation to be stout or slim or to have more money. The point is that the self-oriented people will indulge in meditation for an improvement or an increase of that very materiality which separates them from the Divine and such meditation will never serve the purpose for which they are urged to practise it. Very often their human desires, when fulfilled, would leave them more unsatisfied, because their self-orientation deprives them from the wisdom to know what their real needs are. The self-oriented person is ignorant of severe limitations of the human mind and all resourcefulness of God:

One who claims to know what is good for him/her is ignorant. The ignorant does not realize that God knows all.³⁷

Only the Guru-oriented knows that it is the Divine within who is all wisdom and may plan better for any individual:

The God-oriented person is given what is right and this person does not regret receiving it. God alone knows what is in store.³⁸

The Divine is within me and the same Divine is within you. That is revealed through meditation. The presence of God and the power of God are within us but on account of our worldly desires we have become self-oriented people. We have built up a state of consciousness that consists of layers and layers of the material illusions. A self-oriented person does not succeed in breaking through these layers to reach the altitude of God. Until we do so, we shall fail in our Meditation and miss the path to fulfillment:

The ignorant and blind egocentrics are deluded by doubt and they do not see the veils of falsehood. Ego closed the fortress of our body.³⁹

The self-oriented depends entirely on the human sense for guidance. To the human sense, the spiritual way of life seems either impossible, or short-lived and intangible. Such a person does not realize that, in reality, the most tangible thing in the world is the Divine Presence and all worldly objects are symbols of God's presence. Until that is realized, the things of this world are not outer symbols of the Divine Grace. When one becomes the Guru-Oriented, these symbols change their meaning and one understands:

The world is the Abode of the True One and the True One abides in it.⁴⁰

As long as self-oriented men and women live by bread alone, by the strife and struggle involved in human activity; as long as they are dependent exclusively on outer symbols or effects, they will be misled. After wasting many efforts they will end up as nothing and discover eventually that these worldly possessions are transitory. We can see the effects of a dependence on material things as we look into the faces of the men and women who are living by these effects placing their reliance only on the health of their bodies, the wealth of their pocket books, and other things of this world. In those people, you will see a picture of a self-oriented person. This type of mentality should be discarded under Guru's guidance.:

O my mind become *Gurmukh*, and extinguish the fire within. Let the Words of the Guru abide within your mind; let egoism and desires die.⁴¹

I dedicate my mind and intellect to the Guru. By His Grace I am able to do what was impossible to do.⁴²

When we become the seekers, we pledge that we shall obey the scriptural injunction to let the Guru bear our witness. We know not what we should seek, but the Guru makes the intercession for us:

I offer my mind and body to the Guru, who has shown me the way to the God.⁴³

Without the Guru's Grace, one's strivings bear no fruit.⁴⁴

In the effort to Meditation, there will come a certain moment when the seeker is penetrated by a ray of God, when a touch of God breaks through into his consciousness, not because of himself, but in spite of himself. From the moment that ray touches him, the goal is inevitable; he will be imbibed in Meditation and find his way right to the Divine consciousness.

The amount of illumining force and power of Meditation that flows to us is determined by Divine Grace. Whether or not we reach the final goal of Meditation is not our problem. Some will seek and strive until they exhaust themselves and yet will not attain it; others will go along easily and steadily; and a few will spontaneously burst out all over with the spring time of the *Sabad*-consciousness:

He alone worships the Lord on whom His Grace bestowed.⁴⁵

Here we are rewarded and we recognize that reward by our humility and continuously being thankful:

He on whom is His Mercy gathers the Treasure of Devotion.⁴⁶

The point of this discussion is that the experience of the Divine that we seek in Meditation is one that is achieved purely through Grace. In whatever degree it comes, it comes as the gift of God. It does not come because we earn it; it does not come because we deserve it; it does not come primarily because we are good men or women. In fact, it is often likely to come to the sinful one, because the inner struggle of the sinner may be greater than the struggle of the good man, and such

a struggle is often highly preparative for receiving the Grace. But the Grace comes unrelated to our efforts. Guru said:

He, our Lord, Meets not through (forced) effort, nor (show of) service, but Meets He all-too-spontaneously.⁴⁷

When the Lord is in His Mercy, He makes us contemplate His Name.⁴⁸

The only responsibility that we have is that our desire be for the Divine-experience, and that desire be shown forth by the sincerity of our effort and the depth of our devotion for Meditation. That is the extent of our responsibility:

Says Nanak, I encountered God spontaneously.⁴⁹

Assuring fact is that in the experience of every earnest seeker, there comes a period of the Grace. It may be achieved through something that is heard, something that is read, or more often, it comes through a direct contact with the consciousness of a spiritual teacher like the *Guru Granth Sahib*. When it comes, the student needs no further help from sources outside of himself. His entire grace is received from within and his entire illumination, equipoise, and regenerative power come from within.

From that moment on, the seeker becomes a blessing to others along the way, bringing inspiration to them. As this person goes deeper into the meditation, he/she awakens in others this same Grace. In proportion as any individual receives the Grace, that Grace becomes a light unto those who are within their orbit. Everyone who has ever received an inspiration has been the light to others, and it was the light in some one's consciousness that brought about the Grace to others. Whatever degree of Grace we realize, it automatically makes us, in that degree, a help to all those who touch our consciousness.

Dwells he on the Lord's Name and makes others to follow the Way of the All-powerful God, the Emancipator of all.⁵⁰

Saint Kabir compared God and the saint (realized person) and concluded that both deserve our offering as each one has a contribution to make:

Kabir; Serve only the Saint and thy God, for God emancipates thee and the Saint makes thee cherish thy Lord.⁵¹

It is the purpose of Meditation : that each one may attain a degree of that Grace through the experience of the Meditation and once one has achieved the Grace inspires others to Meditation:

He meditates himself, and makes others dwell upon the Lord's Name.⁵²

It is through your Grace that I am given the human life form. Now it is my prayer that you bestow your presence in my consciousness, O God.⁵³

Our true identity has been, is, and always will be the Divine identity. It has been hidden from sight during this period of mortality in which we are put to sleep in the state of human consciousness. The only purpose of meditation is to awaken our consciousness to this Divinity. Thus, when we exercise meditation with the Grace of the Guru and God, its success shows up in an illumination of our mind and uplifting of our consciousness to that Divinity.⁵⁴

The seeker of meditation experiences this state of awareness in consciousness. It is the purest state of awareness or the consciousness devoid of all its illusionary activities and contents. Here all fluctuations of mind 'settle down', leaving consciousness alone in a continuous state of 'divine *samadhi*'. The Guru says:

Seekers meditate and always witness the God's presence.⁵⁵

Seekers meditate to experience the presence of the Divine.⁵⁶

Once we are illuminated, we will find this illumination to be very

intoxicating. For one thing, we will never have to be concerned about our getting off the path of *Naam Jap*. We will be lost as a human consciousness and, therefore, become a new consciousness, the Divine consciousness, forever.

Although the experience of meditation is properly regarded as a 'higher' state of consciousness, often, it may be associated with a global enhancement of the individual's psychological well being, physical health, and effectiveness in worldly activity. The modern research on people practising a variety of meditation techniques can corroborate many of the empirical claims. They include a restful physiological state, reduction of stress physiology, calming of autonomic and cardiovascular systems, promotion of a coherent central nervous system functioning and enhancement of psychological functioning. These effects have been reported to occur in association with reports of the 'pure consciousness' experience. For some interesting physiological studies, see for example, Levine (1976), Dillbeck and Bronson (1981) and Farrow and Hebert (1982) and Shear (1990). However, a true practitioner achieves far more bliss in the 'higher' states of consciousness so that this experience comes to be a component of all of one's other, more mundane activities and sorts of experience. When a meditative state becomes a part and parcel of all body functions, all other benefits are only tangential. The Guru affirms:

All your diseases, sorrows and sins will be erased, when you meditate on the Lord's Name, even for an instant.⁵⁷

I have attained total perfection, and all my works are perfectly completed; the illness of egoism has been totally eradicated. Millions of sins were destroyed in an instant; meeting with the Guru, I chant the Name of the Creator, Har, Har.⁵⁸

More importantly, meditation results in a state of consciousness free from many mental contents of the human states. They include

sensations, intentions, thoughts, and even subjective spatio-temporal manifold in which such phenomenon of awareness could reside. This state displays consciousness in its purest state. First this experience may seem to come and go, but gradually it becomes more lasting, and then becomes, as the background of all of one's other experiences (thoughts, outer perceptions, etc.). As these experiences become phenomenologically more concrete, they give rise to experiences of extension without contents or directionality. It fills all the spaces of consciousness where we normally keep contents of sensations, thoughts, etc.

The experience of awakening through meditation is intersubjectively accessible and culture-invariant. It is a intersubjectively corroboratable experiences of the folding of consciousness. It is clearly recognized as 'facts' of a spiritual consciousness. Some aspects of the experience of meditation are reportable, The reportable aspect of this experience may be considered a kind of quale (for definition, see Ramachandran and Hirstein⁵⁹), that is remembered even after the experience. The exact nature of this quale is not known at all. Thus on this account, a phenomenological component is added to what we ordinarily take to be the non-conscious experience. This narration reflects what might be called the 'natural' approach to the 'pure consciousness' experience, of the sort taken regularly, for example, by meditating Sikhs, saints, seekers, yogis, vedanties, and Vijnavadan Buddhists. Some who prefer to refer to the experience as truth versus existence in order to avoid even a hint of censure of content. Here is one description of this experience by a Sikh theologian of highest repute, Bhai Gurdas:

At first site of Divine I lost all other perceptions, intelligence or wisdom. Attention to my own consciousness or stillness into my own mind was gone. I lost my own faculty of knowledge. Stillness of stillness or the ego of my ego disappeared. Any love for worldly possessions or things was gone. The Divine vision brings wonders. I am amazed and lost in the wonder of wonders.⁶⁰

Therefore, to be meaningful, the drive for Meditation must be directed only to achieve the new consciousness. To achieve this, the motivation for our Meditation must be of spiritual rather than materialistic in its character. Let us remember this very fact that we want to seek the Divine in Meditation. Let us measure the quality of our efforts to meditate by the degree of spiritual illumination we are seeking, and from that we shall know as to where we stand on our path to fulfillment. The promise of Meditation is fulfillment, but let us be sure that fulfillment for which we are meditating is a spiritual fulfillment, and then we shall meditate on the Name of the God to accept us in the Divine Kingdom where only the Divine consciousness prevails. The Guru remarks:

When we experience an appetite for the True Name our pains will depart according to the intensity such as hunger. True satiation comes from the Holy Name and in the company of the holy we are illuminated with Divine qualities.⁶¹

Through meditation we come to realize that our state of consciousness is not actually separate from God. We can no more be separated from God than a gold ring can be separated from the gold. Gold is the ring; gold constitutes the ring. There is no possible way to remove the gold from ring without destroying it, because it is not gold plus a ring, but it is only the gold ring says Bhagat Ravidas:

Do gold and gold bracelets differ? Or water and waves differ? Certainly they do not. Similarly Thou art I and I am Thou; where is the difference?⁶²

Just as water loses its identity and acquires all colours, so does the spiritual person becomes one with God. As many metals become gold upon a touch of the mystic stone and intoxicating smell of perfume resides in sandal wood so does God comes to live in the heart of a devotee.⁶³

Through meditation we cannot be separated from God, because there is no 'we'. Actually, there is no such thing in the entire world as 'you' or 'me'. God is infinite and God is in everything. God constitutes you and me, and our life, mind, soul and being, just as gold constitutes the ring. Gold is the substance and the ring is a form. God is the substance and the individual is the form. God is the essence of our being. Scripture illustrates this through many examples:

Why go out to search for God in the woods? God abides within us all unattached. As fragrance lives in the flower and reflection in the mirror, so also God lives within you: search God within your heart. Know God within and without you; this is the wisdom imparted by the Guru. Says Nanak, Without knowing oneself, one is not rid of the smut of Doubt.⁶⁴

Notes and References

1. ਨਾਮ ਧਨ ਬਿਨੁ ਹੋਰ ਸਭ ਬਿਖੁ ਜਾਣੁ॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p.664.
2. ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਮਮਤਾ ਫੁਨਿ ਅਉ ਬਿਖਿਅਨ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ॥
ਹਰਖ ਸੋਗ ਪਰਸੈ ਜਿਹ ਨਾਹਨਿ ਸੇ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹੈ ਦੇਵਾ॥
Ibid., p.220.
3. ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਜੇ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਾਗੇ ਤੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਨਰ ਜਮਿ ਘੁਟੀਐ॥
Ibid., p.170.
4. ਜਪਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਸਤਰੀਐ ਹੋਰੁ ਦੁਤੀਆ ਬਿਰਥੀ ਸਾਖੀ॥
Ibid., p. 1227.
5. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1378.
6. ਕਿਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਕੁਸਲੁ ਹੋਤ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ॥
ਕਿਉ ਪਾਈਐ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਮ ਸਹਾਈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਕੁਸਲੁ ਨ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਸਭ ਮਾਇਆ॥
ਊਚੇ ਮੰਦਰ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਛਾਇਆ॥
ਝੂਠੇ ਲਾਲਚਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ॥੧॥
ਹਸਤੀ ਘੋੜੇ ਦੇਖਿ ਵਿਗਾਸਾ॥
ਲਸਕਰ ਜੋੜੇ ਨੇਬ ਖਵਾਸਾ॥
ਗਲਿ ਜੇਵੜੀ ਹਉਮੈ ਕੇ ਫਾਸਾ॥੨॥
ਰਾਜੁ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਦਹ ਦਿਸ ਸਾਰੀ॥
ਮਾਣੈ ਰੰਗ ਭੋਗ ਬਹੁ ਨਾਰੀ॥ ਜਿਉ ਨਰਪਤਿ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਭੇਖਾਰੀ॥੩॥

ਏਕੁ ਕੁਸਲੁ ਮੇ ਕਉ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਤਾਇਆ॥
 ਹਰਿ ਜੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਰੇ ਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਿਆ ਭਗਤਾ ਭਾਇਆ॥
 ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਉਮੈ ਮਾਰਿ ਸਮਾਇਆ॥੪॥
 ਇਨ ਬਿਧਿ ਕੁਸਲ ਹੋਤ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ॥
 ਇਉ ਪਾਈਐ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਮ ਸਹਾਈ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ਦੂਜਾ॥

Ibid., p. 175.

7. ਨਾਨਕ ਆਣੇ ਆਵੈ ਰਾਸਿ॥ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਸਾਬਾਸਿ॥

Ibid., p. 25.

8. ਚਾਰਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਮਾਗੈ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਗੈ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੇ ਆਪੁਨਾ ਦੂਖੁ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ॥ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਦ ਗਾਵੈ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੇ ਆਪੁਨੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਲੋਚੈ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਇਹ ਹਉਮੈ ਛੋਰੈ॥
 ਜੇ ਕੇ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਤੇ ਡਰੈ॥ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ਪਰੈ॥
 ਜਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਦਰਸ ਪਿਆਸਾ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਸਾ॥

Ibid., p. 266.

9. ਸਿਮਰਉ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵਉ॥
 ਕਲਿ ਕਲੇਸ ਤਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਮਿਟਾਵਉ॥

Ibid., p. 262.

10. ਵਿਣੁ ਤੁਧੁ ਹੋਰੁ ਜਿ ਮੰਗਣਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਦੁਖਾ ਕੈ ਦੁਖ॥
 ਦੇਹਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੀਆ ਉਤਰੈ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਭੁਖ॥

Ibid., p. 958.

11. ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋਈ ਨਰੁ ਸੁਖੀਆ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਵੈ॥
 ਅਉਰ ਸਗਲ ਜਗੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿਆ ਨਿਰਭੈ ਪਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਵੈ॥

Ibid., p. 220.

12. ਗਈ ਬਹੋਤੁ ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋਤੁ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਦੁਖਦਾਰੀ॥
 ਕਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਾ ਲੋਭੀ ਮਾਇਆਧਾਰੀ॥
 ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਿਓ ਭਗਤੁ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ਕਾ ਇਹ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਪੈਜ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., p. 624.

13. ਕੰਚਨ ਨਾਰੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੀਉ ਲੁਭਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੋਹੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਮਾਇਆ॥
 ਘਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਘੋੜੇ ਖੁਸੀ ਮਨੁ ਅਨ ਰਸਿ ਲਾਇਆ॥
 ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਕਿਉ ਛੁਟਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇਆ॥੧॥
 ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਇਹ ਨੀਚ ਕਰਮ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੇ॥
 ਗੁਣਵੰਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਬਖਸਿ ਅਵਗਣ ਸਭਿ ਮੇਰੇ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥
 ਕਿਛੁ ਰੂਪੁ ਨਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਢੰਗੁ ਨ ਮੇਰਾ॥
 ਕਿਆ ਮੁਹੁ ਲੈ ਬੋਲਹ ਗੁਣ ਬਿਹੂਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿਆ ਨ ਤੇਰਾ॥
 ਹਮ ਪਾਪੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਗੁਰ ਉਬਰੇ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੇਰਾ॥੨॥

ਸਭ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਭੁ ਮੁਖੁ ਨਕੁ ਦੀਆ ਵਰਤਣ ਕਉ ਪਾਣੀ॥
 ਅੰਨੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਕਪੜੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਦੀਆ ਰਸ ਅਨਿ ਭੋਗਣੀ॥
 ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਸੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਪਸੁ ਹਉ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣੀ॥

Ibid., p. 167.

14. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 27.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
16. Lal, Harbans, 'Habits of Mind: Evolution and Instinct,' *From Both Sides of The Ocean*, (in Press.).
17. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1074.
18. Lal, Harbans, 'Elements of Meditation: Indispensability of Divine Grace', *Sikh Review*, (in Press).
19. Bhai Gurdas, *Var 30, Pauri 1*.
- 19a. Term meditation is used interchangeably for *Naam Jap* and *Simran*. In reality *Naam Jap* is a behavioral skill and *Simran* is a state of mind.
20. ਮਨਮੁਖ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਪਤਿ ਜਾਇ॥ ਸਬਦੇ ਸਾਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਓ ਲਾਗੇ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p. 28.
21. *Guru Granth Sahib* p. 429.
22. ਮਨਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਅਭ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਸਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਪਚਹਿ ਦਿਵਾਨੇ॥
Ibid., p. 1345.
23. ਵਿਛੜਿਆ ਮੇਲੈ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੰਜੋਗ॥
Ibid., p. 934.
24. ਅਗਿਆਨੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਕਟਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਭਏ ਬਸੀਠਾ॥
Ibid., p. 708.
25. ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਸਾਖ ਹਰੀ ਹਰੀਆਵਲ ਸਹਿਜ ਪਕੈ ਸੇ ਮੀਠਾ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਅਸੁਨਿ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਭਏ ਬਸੀਠਾ॥
Ibid., p. 1109.
26. ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤਿ ਤਿਆਗੀਐ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ॥
Ibid., p. 814.
27. ਕਬਨੀ ਬਦਨੀ ਜੇ ਕਰੇ ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਬੂਝ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਘਟਿ ਚਾਨਣਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਾਵੈ ਸੋਇ॥
Ibid., p. 492.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 633.
29. Lal, Harbans, 'Images of Self: An Introduction', *From Both Sides of the Ocean*, 30: Nov-Dec, pp. 15-16, 1995.
30. *Guru Granth Sahib* p. 915.
31. ਕੰਚਨ ਨਾਰੀ ਮਹਿ ਜੀਉ ਲੁਭਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੋਹੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਮਾਇਆ॥
 ਘਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਘੋੜੇ ਖੁਸੀ ਮਨੁ ਰਸਿ ਲਾਇਆ॥
 ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਕਿਉ ਛੁਟਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇਆ॥੧॥

ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਮ ਇਹ ਨੀਚ ਕਰਮ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਰੇ॥
 ਗੁਣਵੰਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਇਆਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਤ ਬਖਸਿ ਅਵਗਣ ਸਭਿ ਮੇਰੇ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
 ਕਿਛੁ ਰੂਪੁ ਨਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਢੰਗੁ ਨ ਮੇਰਾ॥
 ਕਿਆ ਮੁਹੁ ਲੈ ਬੋਲਹ ਗੁਣ ਬਿਹੂਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿਆ ਨ ਤੇਰਾ॥
 ਹਮ ਪਾਪੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਗੁਰ ਉਬਰੇ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਸੁਤਗੁਰ ਕੇਰਾ॥੨॥
 ਸਭੁ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਮੁਖੁ ਨਕੁ ਦੀਆ ਵਰਤਣ ਕਉ ਪਾਣੀ॥
 ਅੰਨੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਕਪੜੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਦੀਆ ਰਸ ਅਨਿ ਭੋਗਾਣੀ॥
 ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਸੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਪਸੁ ਹਉ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣੀ॥੩॥

Ibid., p. 167.

32. ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਘਟ ਮਹਿ ਵਸੈ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਗਵਾਏ॥
 ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਾਮੇ ਮੰਨਿ ਵਸਾਏ॥

Ibid., p. 944.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 749.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

37. *Ibid.*, 1066.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 514.

39. ਬਜਰ ਕਪਾਟ ਕਾਇਆ ਗੜ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਕੂੜੁ ਕੁਸਤੁ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੀ॥
 ਭਰਮਿ ਭੂਲੇ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਅਣਵਨੀ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਅੰਧ ਅਗਿਆਨੀ॥

Ibid., p. 514.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

41. ਮਨੁ ਰੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ॥ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਕਹਿਆ ਮਨਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਮਾਰਿ॥

Ibid., p. 22.

42. ਮਨੁ ਬੁਧਿ ਅਰਪਿ ਧਰਉ ਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਗੁਰ ਪਰਦਾਸੀ ਮੈ ਅਕਥੁ ਕਥਈਆ॥

Ibid., p. 834.

43. ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਕਾਟਿ ਦੇਉ ਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ ਜਿਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਾਰਗੁ ਪੰਥੁ ਦਿਖਈਆ॥

Ibid., p. 836.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 672.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 1256.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 555.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 1157.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 1206.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 1373.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

53. ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹ ਪਾਈ ਹੈ ਦੇਹੁ ਦਰਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਰਾਇਆ॥
Ibid., p. 207.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 1171.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 1174.
57. ਰੋਗ ਸੋਗ ਤੇਰੇ ਮਿਟਹਿ ਸਗਲ ਅਘ ਨਿਮਖ ਹੀਐ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ॥
Ibid., p. 1208.
58. ਸਰਬ ਸਿਧਿ ਕਾਰਜ ਸਭਿ ਸਵਰੇ ਅਹੰ ਰੋਗ ਸਗਲ ਹੀ ਖਇਆ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਪਰਾਧ ਖਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਖਉ ਭਈ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਹਿਆ॥
Ibid., p. 1213.
59. Ramachandaran, V.S. and William Hirstein, *Three Laws of Qualia*, J. Conciousness Studies, 1997, 4, p. 429-457.
60. ਦਰਸਨ ਦੇਖਤ ਹੀ ਸੁਧਿ ਕੀ ਨ ਸੁਧਿ ਰਹੀ।
ਬੁਧਿ ਕੀ ਨ ਬੁਧਿ ਰਹੀ ਮਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਮਤਿ ਹੈ।
ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਅਉ ਧਿਆਨ ਰਹਿਓ।
ਗਿਆਨਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਗਿਆਨਰਹਿਓ ਗਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਗਤਿ ਹੈ।
ਧੀਰਜੁ ਕੋ ਧੀਰਜੁ ਗਰਬ ਕੋ ਗਰਬੁ ਗਇਓ। ਰਤਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਰਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਪਤਿ ਮੈ॥
ਅਦਭੂਤ ਪਰਮਦਭੂਤ ਬਿਸਮੈ ਬਿਸਮ। ਅਸ ਚਰਜੈ ਅਸਚਰਜ ਅਤਿ ਅਤਿ ਮੈ॥
Gurdas Bhai, *kabit* 9 in Onkar Singh's *Kabit Sawayya Bhai Gurdas*, p.4, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1993.
61. ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਭੂਖ॥ ਉਤੁ ਭੂਖੈ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੀਅਹਿ ਦੂਖ॥ ---ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਿਲੈ
ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤਾਸਹਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਣ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p. 10.
62. ਤੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਮੋਹੀ ਤੋਹੀ ਅੰਤਰੁ ਕੈਸਾ॥ ਕਨਕ ਕਟਿਕ ਜਲ ਤਰੰਗ ਜੈਸਾ॥
Ibid., p. 93.
63. ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਆਪਾ ਖੋਇ ਬਰਨ ਬਰਨ ਮਿਲੈ।
ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਬਿਬੇਕੀ ਪਰਮਾਤਮ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸ ਪਰਸਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਕਨਿਕ ਧਾਤੁ।
ਚੰਦਨ ਬਨਾਸਪਤੀ ਬਾਸਨਾ ਅਵੇਸ ਹੈ। ਘਤਿ ਘਤਿ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਜੋਤਿ ਓਤਿਪੋਤਿ।
ਭਾਵਨੀ ਭਗਤਿ ਆਦਿ ਕਉ ਓਦੇਸ ਹੈ॥
Bhai Gurdas, *Kabit*, 135, *op.cit.* p. 36.
64. ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਬਨ ਖੋਜਨ ਜਾਈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਸਦਾ ਅਲੇਪਾਤੋਹੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਮਾਈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਪੁਹਪ ਮਧਿ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਸੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੁਕਰ ਮਾਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਛਾਈ॥
ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਸੇ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਖੋਜਹੁ ਭਾਈ॥੧॥
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏਕੇ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬਤਾਈ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਨੁ ਆਪਾ ਚੀਨੈ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਾਈ॥੨॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p. 684.

SOCIAL VISION OF GURU NANAK : PRELUDE TO NEW SOCIAL ORDER

Madanjit Kaur

The milieu in which Guru Nanak (A.D.1469-1539) lived was a crucial period of Indian history. The perception of historical reality of the period and its challenges are transformed into a positive discerning vision in his ideology and is clearly reflected in many of his hymns.¹

A historical interpretation of Guru Nanak's *bani* must embrace both his theology and his response not each by itself but the two together in their inter-related oneness.² In the *bani* of Guru Nanak the reality of the world is socially constituted and the social construction of reality is underpinned by religion to give it a supramundane sanctions.³ In other words the humanly constructed *nomi* are given a cosmic status. Guru Nanak looks upon the contemporary world as disintegrated and delegitimized.⁴ 'Himself shaken to the roots of psychology, Guru Nanak called upon men to fall back on their own inner resources to build a future.'⁵ It is believed that, Guru Nanak set out upon long and arduous missionary journeys (*Udasis*) to preach his message. The works of Bhai Gurdas, the famous theologian of sixteenth century, stands a testimony to this version.⁶

With his vast experience and background Guru Nanak expounded his doctrines for the moral and spiritual uplift of mankind. After Lord Buddha it was Guru Nanak who for the first time championed the cause of the masses in a caste-ridden India⁷. Socially and psychologically the message of Guru Nanak proved most congenial to the peasantry and

the lower strata of the society. It gave them personal and corporate spiritual satisfaction without isolating them from the society. It commended and made sacred the societal role which they were already playing⁸.

The *bani* of Guru Nanak reveals his thorough familiarity with contemporary society. In this connection many of social evils of both the Hindus and Muslims of his time came under his attack. In fact, there is hardly an important aspect of life of his contemporaries that is not directly or indirectly mentioned in his compositions. The range of his experience of contemporary social conditions is strikingly comprehensive. Even the metaphors used in his hymns do reveal the nature of his deep social concerns. However, the over all import is religious. It is to be noted that the close connection between Guru Nanak's social comments and his religious concern is evident from the chief targets of his attack, i.e. the *brahmans* and the *mullahs*. The basic issue of condemnation was that there was a great gulf between their profession and practice. These Hindu and Muslim professional classes were not only supporting practices of useless rituals, customs and ceremonies but were also misleading the masses by promoting superstitions and blind faith among them.⁹

The devotional compositions of Guru Nanak are motivated by an earnest desire to communicate his message to a particular audience:

The brahmin does not believe in *Shastras* and *Vedas*, but in the pursuit of self interest. The *qazi* dispenses justice, plies his rosary and accepts bribes to rob the rightful. On being questioned, he comes out with rationalizations, supported by the *Shariat*. The Hindu leaders have their ears and minds turned to dictates of the Turks. They carry tales against the people and have them fleeced. Yet they undergo rituals of purity. The Jogi with his matted locks is lost both to domestic responsibilities and the true Yogic method. It is *Kaliyuga*, glorifying its evil.¹⁰

Guru Nanak's disenchantment with the whole social order is evident from his insistence on the prevalent disregard of Hindu scripture, the rationalised corruption of the Muslim elite, the compromised existence of the *khatris*, the irrelevance of the Jogi spirituality, and the social facticity of *Kaliyuga*.¹¹

Through his hymns we discover a person who was deeply concerned with the social problems of his times and was genuinely interested in finding solutions to the evils of his age. Guru Nanak in fact took a comprehensive view of contemporary social evils. He comments:

The *Kaliyuga* wields the knife, the rulers are butchers, and *dharma* has taken wings. In the fully dark night of falsehood the moon of truth rises nowhere. I am desperate in my search.¹²

Guru Nanak was very sensitive to the spiritual make up of the people he was addressing. His response to his milieu was bold, humanitarian and unique. It is evident from his hymns that the pangs of existence in his times touched his compassionate heart to make him deeply concerned with the sufferings of his fellow beings. His intense feeling about his age is characterised by the disintegrating effect of the autocratic Turkish rule, political chaos, oppression and corruption at all levels of administration, decline in religious beliefs and human values. The Guru remarks:

Avarice is a king, sin his *wazir*, falsehood is the administrator, lust his deputy, the un-enlightened subject, too, are stricken with greed. The scholar acts like the buffoon: panegyrists cry about heroes. The *pandit* is eristically fond of goods. The religious men keeps on losing merit in his pursuit of salvation. The celibate recluse does not know the way. Each individual takes himself to be perfect. O Nanak only those who are honoured by God in the next world, can be said to be perfect men.¹³

Guru Nanak's denunciation of the ruling classes and the elite, who

lived off the society without being able to perform their responsibilities is specially significant:

The rulers are bloody, like lions, with their running dogs in the village officials, they disturb the subject in good and ill-times. The officials act as the sharp claws of the ruler to draw out blood and marrow of the victims for him.¹⁴

In the *bani* of Guru Nanak there are frequent references to administrative corruption which has been looked upon by the Guru as a natural corollary of the disintegrated society in which knowledge, virtue and spirit have shrunk to hypocrisy and nothingness.¹⁵

At the cultural front the Guru had to contend not only with the rising forces of Islam, an alien faith with its internal animosities between sects,¹⁶ but also with powerful currents in the Hindu religious thought viz., Advaitism, Vaishnavism and the Nath Yogic cults. Bhai Gurdas expounds bitterly on the factional conflict between various Hindu and Muslim sects. In his opinion this intergroup hostility was creating chaos, exploitation and disintegration in the society.¹⁷ The mutual confrontation of the two vital but in several ways contradictory culture-forms, represented by Hinduism and Islam was the axial point of the contemporary cultural crisis. The environment had "possibilities for both creative synthesis and rejective hostility. The creative impulse of the times met its fullest expression in the *bani* Guru Nanak and received from him a definite stamp and direction."¹⁸

The fact that Guru Nanak was able to adopt his theological and religious idiom to suit the religious consciousness of the Indian people drawing on the ideas, Mythology and dialogues of the *Puranas*, Nath cult, Vaishnav *bhakti*, *Sant Parampara* and Yogic tradition, the practices of mysticism and the Indian version of Islam enjoins us to make further investigation into the social vision of Guru Nanak and originality of his social ideology.

The religious stand point of Guru Nanak is that world is real¹⁹ and that man has to follow the will of God. In the religion of Guru Nanak, the ultimate goal is always to carry out the will of God (*Raza or Hukam*) and continuous virtuous endeavour to bring meaning to human existence and unity with the structure of the cosmos. *Hukam* is the cosmic moral force for the operation of the law of retribution and law of Grace (*Nadar/Mehar*). The whole world is subject to the binding law of *Hukam*,²⁰ and the way to God is purely through performing righteous deeds. Guru Nanak said:

Without performing meritorious deeds
no *bhakti* can be attained.²¹

The virtuous deed has been equated with constructive activity in the phenomenal world, and the service of man (*sewa*) has been co-ordinated with the spiritual endeavour. Thus Guru Nanak laid equal emphasis on the faith and the conduct of the man.

The concept of *sewa* (service) has been given a special orientation in Guru Nanak's teachings. Here, *sewa* is beneficent action unsolicitation of any reward; the essence of the pure spirituality. This is an art of living directed towards finding fulfillment of the ultimate aim of life through beneficent action. There is a strong tradition in Sikhism, where the Gurus themselves solicited God to grant them the boon of the humblest *sewa*.²² In fact, *sewa* has been institutionalized in Sikh society. There is an established tradition in Sikh community that high and low must all perform *sewa*; humble manual labour without any social distinction. Guru Nanak's injunction on *sewa* is as following:

All Thy creatures, though Thine receive no fruit without devoted service.²³

In the religion of Guru Nanak moral activity is the chief method of spiritual growth. This ideology has a clear attitude of involvement in social practices and social institutions and serious awareness of social responsibility.

The Guru had been sharply critical of the empty practices and institutions of his time. No inhuman practice remained unexposed. Guru Nanak criticised the tyranny and barbarity of the Mughal invaders, the oppression and brutality of the Afghan rulers, the corruption of the administrative agencies and governing class, the degrading inhumanity of the caste ideology and underlying idea of pollution and naked greed and hypocrisy of the religious leaders and the priestly class (Brahmins and Muslim Mullahs), the rapacity of the rich in amassing wealth, the idleness of Yogis and mendicants, the negligence of the people of their cultural traditions and spiritual values.²⁴ Therefore, all doctrinal orthodoxy and rituals are objected to²⁵, and a search for adequate standard of religious action for personal maturity and social relevance is present.

In the theology of Guru Nanak, religious action in the world becomes more demanding²⁶. The social vision of Guru Nanak was in no manner akin to the perception of the quietest religions. It is evident from the *bani* of Guru Nanak that he wanted a change in moral practices and social institutions. As a prophet of a new religion with his basic perception of unity of God--he categorically made it plain that in the execution of the religious ideals of the worship of 'One God'²⁷ and equality of man--prejudices against caste, creed, women and surrender to exploitation of oppression are wrong acts and against the law of nature. Guru Nanak placed himself on a level with the low caste disinherited folk denied of the path of liberation (*bhakti*). Out of compassion for them he raised his voice:

The lowest among the low castes; lower than the lowliest-

Nanak is with them.

He envies not those, with worldly greatness.

Lord Thy glance of Grace falls on the land where the humble are cherished.²⁸

At another place, he exalts the low caste as thus:

Should any one out of the higher castes serve the Lord,

Beyond expression is his merit.

One out of the lower castes that serves God,

Saith Nanak, may wear shoes made from my skin.²⁹

As a corollary to the sanctity of the equality of mankind, follows the principle of equality of men and women, Guru Nanak's pronouncements:

Why call women impure when without women there would be none.³⁰

In almost all the old religions of the East and West, women has been considered an impediment in the religions of the world in that period, nothing could be more progressive than this feature of Guru Nanak's religion.

As a progenitor of social equality Guru Nanak rejects all sorts of caste discrimination, social abuses, exploitations and oppressions.³¹ Guru Nanak initiated a new way of life introducing innovative structural changes in society. The Guru rejected the Brahminical concept of fixity in social organisation, wherein the place of each caste, with predetermined role structure as well as of the individual in hierarchical set up left no place for transforming of self-developed social order.

In all Hindu religious systems caste ideology was a scripturally accepted social institution, the question of social equality of men could not arise. Guru Nanak has imparted powerfully effective teaching against this universal evil prevalent in the Indian society. Guru Nanak openly repudiates caste system.³² There are various hymns illustrating his feeling of universal humanitarianism. "Guru Nanak does not subscribe to caste taboo. There can be an hierarchy of spiritual states in *khands* (Japuji) but social division into castes are unreal."³³ Guru Nanak's sympathy

with the lower status group is well attested.³⁴ In the opinion of Guru Nanak the lowly are the possible recipients of Grace and Gurū Nanak associates himself with them.³⁵

Guru Nanak played a revolutionary role on the sociological level in providing a social vision for re-structuring society on equalitarian basis by rejecting the concept of caste-based role performance and inhuman hierarchical order legitimised by *Varan Ashram Dharma* as the normative principle for social structure of the Hindu society. The social dynamics of Guru Nanak's thought presented a new normative principle of social organisation which made the people realise their inherent humanistic identity, right of equality and a sense of belonging to a corporate- collective society (*Sangat*).³⁶

Guru Nanak's theology is a unique synthesis of transcendental and phenomenal values. The Guru took due and proper notice of the material well being of mankind while at the same time emphasising its moral and spiritual components. The Guru regards physical and worldly needs as necessary means of the human development. Therefore, the values of *Artha* (material advancement) and *Kama* (fulfilment of natural instincts of human being) - basis of mundane life have been duly recognised³⁷. Guru Nanak has made significant contributions to provide practical solutions to certain human and social problems hitherto rejected or ignored by various religious traditions. This aspect of the Sikh ideology has not been left for the critical appreciation but has been practised in a most dignified and unique manner. Sikh history provides positive and ample proofs of this fact.³⁸

Guru Nanak's social vision in fact, revolutionized human thinking and enthused a new spirit of human activity and social responsibility. It made the people conscious of their situation, status, rights, duties as well as responsibilities by exhorting them to lead an active, noble social life.³⁹ According to Guru Nanak worldly life strictly regulated in accordance with moral and ethical values do not stand in the way of spiritual

development rather it proves a definite impetus for the realisation of higher spiritual goal.⁴⁰ An ideal domestic life has been deemed as the fountain-head by the Guru.⁴¹ Guru Nanak rejected asceticism and commands his followers not to forsake the family and other worldly responsibilities.⁴² The Guru repeatedly emphasised the part a man and a woman has to play as a householder and not merely as a recluse preparing himself for the benefits of the next world while escaping his obligation towards his family and society.⁴³

The Guru laid great stress on man's truthful conduct and performance of his basic duties and obligations towards his fellow beings and society. A true household life as prescribed by Guru Nanak presents an ideal opportunity for the practice of the fundamental principles of *Nam* (meditation on God's Name), *Kirat* (earning by hard and honest labour), *Dan* (charity, altruistic action), *Wand chhakna* (sharing one's earning with needy and fellow human beings), *Ishnan* (purification of the self) and *Sewa* (voluntary service).⁴⁴ According to Guru Nanak an ideal domestic life provides a positive approach to the attainment of the goal of life - *mukti* (salvation). Sikhism professes for the attainment of *jiwan mukta* (during one's own life) by cultivating good deeds in our social relationship and by earning the Grace (*nadar*) of God through *Nam Simran*.

For the fulfilment of real *nam simran* one should first learn to lead a honest and hard life (*Kirat Kamai*), and also to serve the society. The Sikh concept of *Kirat Kamai* signifies the dignity of labour which is totally absent in the life style of ascetics, Jogis and *Sanyasis*.

In the religion of Guru Nanak, the man is exhorted not to begging in order to make both the ends meet but always to strive hard to support himself, to help others and to overcome poverty. This injunction of Guru Nanak is the basic factor of the professional mobility and economic prosperity of the Sikh people. Besides, Guru Nanak does not advocate that one should work for himself alone or for his family

only. Guru Nanak's command for *Wand Chhakna* (or *Wand Chhako*) means that a Sikh must serve his needy brothers and share with them the fruit of his hard and honest earning. The injunction of Guru Nanak is:

He alone O' Nanak Knoweth the way
 Who earneth with the sweat of his brow,
 and then shareth with others.⁴⁵

This being the situation, there remains no question of exploitation of labour of other persons. Guru Nanak affirms:

To exploit the rightful due to others,
 is like eating the (forbidden food) cow for one (Hindu)
 and swine for the other (Muslim).

The Lord vouchsafes for us only
 if we are not usurpers.⁴⁶

Further we observe that the injunction against exploitation of labour in itself is not sufficient in the new social order engaged by Guru Nanak. In fact, society for the collective obligations needs surplus value and corporate funds. The voluntary offerings by the devotees in the Sikh society is of the nature of contribution to the surplus value required for the corporate needs of the community and the humanity in general. In the social vision of Guru Nanak, the economic order is marked by the value of equality and justice without any discrimination of caste or creed. In Guru Nanak's view action motivates the ethical norm for determining individual's place and position in the society. The traditional Hindu concept of *Karma* (action) was equated with service (*sewa*) and labour (*kirat*). To do labour is to follow the *Hukam* (Order) of God and to partake of the creativity of Godhead. Labour is seen as the matrix of all social and material values, in which each member of the society contributes his share according to his capacity

and all are equal partners in the corporate body of the *Panth* (commonwealth). With such formulations of social ethics as envisioned by Guru Nanak, the way was paved for the restructuring of society on equalitarian basis.⁴⁷

It is most appropriate to remark that, Guru Nanak prescribed a value pattern which is not only non-differential but is also non-individualistic.⁴⁸ Here the stress is not on self-seeking individual liberation but on altruistic concern for the humanity as a whole.

The most significant contribution of Guru Nanak in the spiritual field is that, he enhanced the concept of salvation by investing it with collectivistic social dimension.⁴⁹ In his primary composition 'Japuji' Guru Nanak lays emphasis on collective amelioration as the goal of life. The Guru assures:

Those who meditate on the Divine Name,
 Their toiling journey is rewarded.
 With redeemed faces, Nanak, they
 take along to salvation many others.⁵⁰

We have to understand the implications of the teachings of Guru Nanak in the sociological perspective in order to understand the impact of the great Guru on Indian society and world civilisation. The acceptance of householder's life, the consequent necessity of work as a religious duty, the sharing and fair distribution of wealth in society, the condemnation of exploitation are so logically connected with the theology of Guru Nanak's religion from its involvement with social praxis that the significance of Guru Nanak's impact on society is invariably apparent from the above description.

One of the prominent features of the teachings of Guru Nanak is the overwhelming presence of a humanitarian, compassionate attitude towards all humanity, which militate against cruelty and injustice and aims thus at the establishment of a just society.⁵¹

The keynote of the teachings of Guru Nanak lies in the fact that he gave a social orientation to the spiritual values and made people realise that social action is necessary for the religious man. This is amply proved from his *bani* where he strongly protested and condemned the feudal tyranny and sanctioned a crusade against injustice and exploitation.⁵² His concern for the helpless underdogs of society, the low castes and the women is a pointer to his progressive social vision. The potentialities of Guru Nanak's ideology can be explored in the perspective of his scathing attack on contemporary social, cultural and political exploitation as depicted in his *Asa Di Var*.⁵³

The purpose of '*Asa Di Var*' is to portray the frustration of divinity in men. It explains the nature of divinity and alongside it depicts the raw nature of man and warns him against the treacherous forms by which this designing egoism can swindle men out of a genuinely God oriented life. The progressive, radical and revolutionary ideas nurtured carefully in *Asa Di Var* deserves to be pointed out in order to comprehend the seed ideas of the social vision of Guru Nanak. The strong streaks of the socio-political ideology and the depth of its directional thrust is evident in the following hymn:

Neither caste nor political power can confer real status to any person.⁵⁴

Women folk must be given due respect as equal members of our society.⁵⁵

If one were to go by what one witnesses in the contemporary situation, one would see the unusual spectacle of the vehicle of avarice being driven by falsehood.⁵⁶

Talking in terms of balances, only such of these are credited to one's after life account as have been earned through the sweat of one's brow and have been shared with others.⁵⁷

Whenever the springs of society are vitiated by the dominance of

avarice, sin, falsehood, sex, bribery, beggary, wealth and misuse of religion, honourable living becomes difficult.⁵⁸

In society such as ours, where truth is the first casualty men are wont to become fiends and only discipline, hard work and faith in God can come to their rescue in their hour of travail.^{58a}

Asa Di Var presents direct evidence of a well formulated socio-political ideology of Guru Nanak with strong ethical commitments. It openly repudiates social taboos, superstitions, rituals, dogmas and slavish culture.

The Guru rejects *Karam Kand* (salvation by ritual acts) and makes an extensive criticism of rituals and considers *Karam dharam* as unholy bondage.⁵⁹ Guru Nanak considers ritualism as futile exercises and an obstruction to authentic spirituality so emphatically that he disapproved even the wearing of the outer symbols⁶⁰. In Guru Nanak *bani* ritual is considered more of a hindrance than a help in salvation instead inner virtues are emphasised.⁶¹ Guru Nanak criticised 'ancestor's worship'⁶² and also condemns all notions of 'nascent impurity' (*sutak*).⁶³

Ritualistic worship of Religious symbols (idols etc.) is bracketed by Guru Nanak with rites and ceremonies.⁶⁴ Feeding to *Brahman* as ritual has also been disapproved.⁶⁵

The great socio-political implication of *Asa-Di-Var* lies in its revolutionary appeal. Clear hints can be found in the following:

Even the highest in the Land does not have an everlasting right to the highest political office.⁶⁶

Submission to or acceptance of an exploitative and rapacious administrative system at any level amounts to active participation in the perpetuation of corruption and cruelty.⁶⁷

Well-horsed, well-wived, well-housed, well-fed and expensive bureaucracy tends to sit perpetually on the necks of the people, even

when their doom may be in the offing.⁶⁸

It must be kept in mind that most often, the bureaucrats are double-hued sycophants.⁶⁹

All honour to them who remain unsplit. How can a grain split into two ever sprout.⁷⁰

The contemporary polity is denounced by Guru Nanak nearly as much as the social order of his times. Guru Nanak unequivocally denounced the discriminating policy of his contemporary rulers. His denunciation of injustice and oppression at the hands of the rulers and state officials is harsh and bold. It is evident from his hymns that Guru Nanak expected certain norms of behavior from the rulers. The primary obligation of the ruler was to be just and look after the welfare of his subject people both legally and morally. The Guru expects honesty and integrity from the state functionaries in the performance of their duties and consideration for the common people.⁷¹

The hymns of Guru Nanak clearly reveal that the Guru was thoroughly familiar with the political situation of his day. The Guru shows no appreciation for the ruling classes, he identifies himself with the ruled and with the masses. Let us admit the *Salokas* of '*Asa Di Var*' do presume the existence of social tensions on account of political conflict between the feudal elites, misdeeds of the autocracy, corrupt governing class and suppression of the Have-nots and the common masses. The Guru's reaction towards the state policy of repression provides an impulsive motivation to readers and listeners to feel encouraged to have a critical look at the working of the society and the doings of the administrative agencies of the contemporary State. It can be easily imagined that the sufferers of the loathsome caste system, the economically weaker section of the society who constituted the large majority of people must have found such declaration of Guru Nanak quite attractive and the women must have experienced a new hope. It is not difficult to visualize that such progressive ideas must have led to

the expansion of the Sikh faith and motivated the Punjabis of the sixteenth century to follow the teachings of the Guru and introduced an era of social change in the caste-ridden hierarchical Indian society.

It is implied in the view of Guru Nanak that if in any field of life there is aggression or injustice, the religious men cannot remain neutral; he must react in a righteous way. For, once the householder's life was considered to be the medium of the religious growth of man, it became natural for him to accept responsibility in all fields of life. The traditionally created barriers of socio-political segments and religious particularism were deemed artificial, and were once for all broken for the religious man.⁷²

In the theology of Guru Nanak, man as an instrument of God has to carry out the 'Will of God' in helping the weak and destroying the oppressor. Guru Nanak's spiritual system therefore, involves the use of all the available tools, including reason⁷³ and judicious use of force, for the purposeful progress of man.⁷⁴ For, without the use of both these means it is impossible to bring about any social change. In doing so he made a major departure from the earlier *bhakti* and religious traditions. In contrast to other religious systems (excepting Islam) Guru Nanak positively sanctioned entry into the political field.⁷⁵ This break with the past was a direct result of the religious experience, social vision and the objective mission of Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak's value pattern was thus conceived to act as a revolutionary leaven for a fundamental change in social life. Here, *Dharma* is no more seen as a *jati* or *varan* (caste) based differential moral code preserving the hierarchical equilibrium of society⁷⁶, but *dharma* is conceived as a by-product of Divine Compassion. Guru Nanak affirms:

Dharma the earth sustaining Bull

is the logos born of Divine Compassion.⁷⁷

Being an expression of Divine Compassion, *dharma* is a non-discriminating, equalitarian moral principal which makes one's action as the determinant of his place in society as well as his position in the reckoning of God. Sikhism believes:

Our caste or birth is not recognised in the House of Truth.

It is one's deeds that determines ones real identity and place.⁷⁸

Thus the role of religion was given a new sociological orientation by the Sikh Gurus. The institutional growth of Sikhism is due to this new concept of *dharma* generating revolutionary social potentialities. This is a remarkable legacy of Guru Nanak to the Indian Religious Traditions.

In the cosmology of Guru Nanak, God is loving and caring for his creation. This kind of perception leads to God's dynamic activity in this world. God not only reveals itself to men but also enlightens, guides and operates in human history in a purposeful way. Guru Nanak's vision of the universe in its functioning is centered in *Dharma* (moral law that keeps the cosmos going according to the Divine Will). The imagery for it is taken from Puranic mythology.⁷⁹ The operation of the Divine Law and the moral lesson for the end of the evil doers has been expressed with the example of the tyrants like Duryodhan and Hiranyakashipu from Puranic lore.⁸⁰ Guru Nanak's vision of ontology and expression of judgement, unlike that of his contemporary *bhaktas* was not confined to Puranic legendary references, but took in its sweep the contemporary scene wherein tyranny must come to a deserved end too. The hard hearted, the tyrants, the evil doers, the corrupt etc., when their stipulated hour of glory is past must be humbled in dust; that is the Divine Law.⁸¹

Guru Nanak had expressed deep anguish at the prevailing injustice, atrocities, corruption and evil in society, which he has expressed through the symbol of the dark night.⁸²

In Guru Nanak's own time Babar invaded India, bringing so much carnage, destruction and humiliation to Indian people. Guru Nanak was a witness to Babar's inroads to Emnabad (now in Pakistan). The four hymns of the Guru⁸³ pertaining to this occasion, besides throbbing with pity for the innocent humanity and with sorrow over the fall of India; state the great moral lesson on which, cosmos law and neglect of which by men can lead only to suffering and self-destruction. In his great vision on the destiny of nations, when they forsake the path of righteousness, the Guru expresses his judgement on the degenerate state of Indian society and consequent repercussions of the fate of nation (Hindustan). Guru Nanak was the first Indian thinker to make people of India conscious about their duty to their nation.

Guru Nanak raises his voice in Divine indignation at Babar's invasion, condemns the profligate Afghan rulers for their weaknesses and affirms that in all this carnage the Divine Law, is seen operating and that suffering is ultimately a Divine mystery, an inevitable part of man's destiny, yet from suffering the path of liberation and salvation is through resignation to the Divine Will.⁸⁴ In *Babar bani*, Guru Nanak also deplores the brutality of the invaders and the un-preparedness of the local rulers. He even goes to the extent of complaining to God as the guardian of men, in allowing the weak to be oppressed by the strong. In doing so, he was in fact clearly laying one of the basic principles of his religion. He not only sanctioned the use of force for a righteous cause but also prescribed that it was both the duty and responsibility of religious man to resist aggression and brutality.⁸⁵

It is clearly evident from the above study that Guru Nanak's idea of social commitment is clearly discernible from his denunciation of the contemporary socio-political conditions. In his view the social and political order of his days had lost legitimacy precisely because it had drifted from moral values. By implication of this grass rooted observations it is clearly indicated that a new social order based on religious dispensation

was direly needed in the contemporary situation. Historical developments supports this formulation and are witness of the creative genius of the founder of the Sikh faith. This inference is co-related to Guru Nanak's decisive spiritual experience at Sultanpur Lodhi culminating to his final discovery of those religious ideals to which he has to give practical expression later on at Kartarpur (now in Pakistan).⁸⁶

The aim of Guru Nanak's ideology was not individual emancipation, but the amelioration of man and society both. And for this motto he laid down the foundation of a religious system and a society that had internally to remove the disintegrating forces of the caste ideology and externally to fight against political oppression. It was a gigantic task. The Guru had first to organise a new society intensely motivated with new values, with real sense of brotherhood, inspired to struggle and sacrifice for justice and deeply committed to achieving new goals.⁸⁷ The spirit of brotherhood was actually institutionalised as part of structure of the society itself through the institutions of *sangat*⁸⁸, *langar*⁸⁹ and *kirtan*⁹⁰. For the leadership of this value oriented community he also introduced the institution of 'Guruship' (appointing a successor) so that in due time the society could become fully organised and mature enough to complete the social tasks set before it. Therefore, Guru Nanak not only laid down in his *bani* a value system but also initiated and actually laid the foundation of the society that was subsequently continued and developed by his successor gurus.

Conclusions

It is concluded from the above study that through his teachings and practices, Guru Nanak initiated new innovative structural changes in the society and paved the prelude for social transformation in the orthodox set up by introducing progressive and universal normative pattern of social relationship.

Guru Nanak took a comprehensive view of the contemporary social milieu and ushered in an era of social awakening in the Indian

society. Through his holy words, Guru Nanak formulated specific and well defined ideology for establishing a new social order.

In his philosophy of protest against conformity of the existing social system lay the seed of a vital and progressive change in attitudes, beliefs and values of the people. The ideology of Guru Nanak motivated the people of Punjab to strive for social change in the caste-ridden hierarchical social stratification sanctioned and legitimized by Vedic normative culture.

The religion of Nanak encouraged value shift in the society and the Guru proved to be significant 'change agent' who initiated, caused and introduced social and cultural change in the sixteenth century Punjab. With this awareness began the construction of a new society based on objective system of moral values which results in the emergence of the 'Sikh *Panth*' in order to meet the historical challenges of the time. The emergence of Sikh community as a distinct social phenomenon is the direct evidence of Guru Nanak's creative social vision and pragmatic approach to solve some of the perennial social evils of the Indian Society.

Notes and References

1. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 145, 260, 360, 417, 468, 471, 630, 722, 723, 903, 951, 1191 and 1288.
2. Surjit Hans, 'Historical Analysis of Sikh Literature (A.D.1500-1850)', Ph.D. Thesis, Department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1980.(Unpublished) p.1.
3. *Ibid.*, p.2.
4. *Ibid.*, p.1.
5. *Ibid.*, p.501.
6. The works of Bhai Gurdas, the famous Sikh theologian of sixteenth century stands a testimony to this version:
ਚੜਿਆ ਸੋਧਣਿ ਧਰਤਿ ਲੁਕਾਈ॥
 (To purify and divinise the entire mankind on parts of the globe).
 -*Varan Bhai Gurdas*, eds. Giani Hazara and Bhai Vir Singh, Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar, 1962, Var I, Pauri 24.

7. Puran Singh, *Spirit of the Sikhs*, Pub. by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1981, Vol.II, p.317.
8. W.Owen Cole, *Sikhism and its Indian Context 1469-1708*, D.K. Agencies(P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1984, p.107.
9. J.S.Grewal, *The Sikh Ideology, Polity and Social Order*, Manmohan Publications, New Delhi, pp.4,5.
10. ਸਾਸਤੁ ਬੇਦੁ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ॥ ਆਪੇ ਆਪੈ ਪੂਜਾ ਹੋਇ॥
ਕਾਜੀ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਬਹੈ ਨਿਆਇ॥ ਫੇਰੇ ਤਸਬੀ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ॥
ਵਢੀ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਹਕੁ ਗਵਾਏ॥ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਪੁਛੈ ਤਾ ਪਤਿ ਸੁਣਾਏ॥
ਤਰਕ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਕਨਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਮਾਹਿ॥ ਲੋਕ ਮੁਹਾਵਹਿ ਚਾੜੀ ਖਾਇ॥
ਚਉਕਾ ਦੇ ਕੈ ਸੁਚਾ ਹੋਇ॥ ਐਸਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਵੇਖਹੁ ਕੋਇ॥
ਜੋਗੀ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜਟਾ ਬਿਭੂਤ॥ ਆਗੈ ਪਾਛੈ ਰੋਵਹਿ ਪੂਤ॥
ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ॥ ਕਿਤੁ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਛਾਈ ਪਾਈ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਲਿ ਕਾ ਏਹੁ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥ ਆਪੇ ਆਖਣੁ ਆਪੇ ਜਾਣੁ॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p.951.
11. Surjit Hans, *op.cit.*, p.23.
12. ਕਲਿ ਕਾਤੀ ਰਾਜੇ ਕਾਸਾਈ ਧਰਮੁ ਪੰਖ ਕਰਿ ਉਡਰਿਆ॥
ਕੂੜੁ ਅਮਾਵਸ ਸਚੁ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ ਦੀਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਹ ਚੜਿਆ॥
ਹਉ ਭਾਲਿ ਵਿਕੁੰਨੀ ਹੋਈ॥ ਆਧੋਰੈ ਰਾਹੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ॥
ਵਿਚਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਦੁਖੁ ਰੋਈ॥ ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਿਨਿ ਬਿਧਿ ਗਤਿ ਹੋਈ॥
Guru Granth Sahib, p.145.
13. ਲਬੁ ਪਾਪੁ ਦੁਇ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਹਤਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਿਕਦਾਰੁ॥
ਕਾਮੁ ਨੇਬੁ ਸਦਿ ਪੁਛੀਐ ਬਹਿ ਬਹਿ ਕਰੇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥
ਅੰਧੀ ਰਯਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣੀ ਭਾਹਿ ਭਰੇ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ॥
ਗਿਆਨੀ ਨਚਹਿ ਵਾਜੇ ਵੇਵਹਿ ਰੂਪ ਕਰਹਿ ਸੀਗੁਰ॥
ਊਚੇ ਕੂਕਹਿ ਵਾਦਾ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਜੋਧਾ ਕਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
ਮੁਰਖ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਹਿਕਮਤਿ ਹੁਜਤਿ ਸੰਜੈ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਿਆਰੁ॥
ਧਰਮੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਗਾਵਾਵਹਿ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ॥
ਜਤੀ ਸਦਾਵਹਿ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਛਡਿ ਬਹਹਿ ਘਰ ਬਾਰੁ॥
ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਪੂਰਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਘਟਿ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਆਖੇ॥
ਪਤਿ ਪਰਵਾਣਾ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਾਈਐ ਤਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੋਲਿਆ ਜਾਪੈ॥
Ibid., pp.468-69.
14. ਰਾਜੇ ਸੀਹ ਮਕਸਦ ਕੁਤੇ॥ ਜਾਇ ਜਗਾਇਨ੍ ਬੈਠੇ ਸੁਤੇ॥
ਚਾਕਰ ਨਹਦਾ ਪਾਇਨ੍ ਘਾਉ॥ ਰਤੁ ਪਿਤੁ ਕੁਤਿਹੋ ਚਟਿ ਜਾਹੁ॥
Ibid., p.1288.
15. Surjit Hans, *op. cit.*, p.22.

16. Indian Muslims were also divided into different sects. The majority of Muslims in Punjab was Sunni. Besides, Shias, Sufis (Chistis, Sohrawardis, Roshanis, Qadiriya, Naqashbandis), Kalandaris, Shaikhs, Siddiqis, Usmanis and Faruqis and Ismailies were other Muslim religious groups in Punjab. These Muslim sects observed their own customs and ceremonies. They had even differences and contradictions on issues of beliefs, doctrines, worship, rites, rituals and sacraments. (See Muhammad Akbar, *The Punjab under the Mughals*, Idarah-i-Adabiyat -I, Delhi, 1974, ch. XVII.

17. Bhai Gurdas comments:

ਚਾਰਿ ਵਰਨ ਚਾਰਿ ਮਜਹਬਾ ਜਗ ਵਿਚਿ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੇ॥
ਖੁਦੀ ਬਖੀਲਿ ਤਕਬਰੀ ਖਿਚੋਤਨ ਕੇਰੇਨਿ ਧਿਛਾਣੇ॥

Varan Bhai Gurdas, Var 1, Pauri 21.

18. Harbans Singh, *The Heritage of The Sikhs*, Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 3-4.

19. Guru Nanak affirms:

ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 463.

20. Guru Nanak said:

ਏਕੋ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਸਭ ਲੋਈ॥
ਏਕਸੁ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਓਪਤਿ ਹੋਈ॥

Ibid., p. 223.

Again:

ਹੁਕਮੁ ਬਿਸਮਾਦੁ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਪਛਾਣੈ
ਜੀਅ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਚੁ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਈ॥

(He alone knows the way of life of truth, who under his *hukam* perceives in wonder the universal order).

Ibid., p. 940.

21. ਵਿਣੁ ਗੁਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥

Ibid., p. 4.

22. *Ibid., pp. 486 and 751.*

23. ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ॥

Ibid., p. 354.

Again:

ਜੰਗਮ ਜੋਧ ਜਤੀ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰੈ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ॥

ਬਿਨੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਪਾਵਸਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਾਰੀ॥

(I have learnt by the Light given by the Master, perfectly endowed:
Recluse, hero, celibate or sanyasi;
None may expect to earn merit without service in which lies the essence
of purity).

Ibid., p. 992.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 467, 730, 951, also p.1343.
25. Daljit Singh, *Essays on the Authenticity of Kartar Puri Bir and the Integrated Logic and Unity of Sikhism*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1987, p.94; See *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp.91, 141, 145, 349, 417, 468, 862, 1245, 1330.
26. Guru Nanak says :
ਜਗੁ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ॥
ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ॥
(He who travels this path must prepare to give up life without demure).
Guru Granth Sahib, p.1412.
27. The monotheism of Guru Nanak is enshrined in 'Mul Mantra', the opening lines of the *Guru Granth Sahib* as:
ੴ
(Ultimate Reality is the Sole Supreme Being of eternal manifestation).
Ibid., p.1.
28. ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ॥
ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ॥
Ibid., p.15.
29. ਜਾਤਿ ਕੁਲੀਨੁ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜੇ ਹੋਇ॥ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਕਹਣਾ ਕਹਹੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥
ਵਿਚਿ ਸਨਾਤੀ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਹੋਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਛੀਆ ਪਹਿਰੈ ਸੋਇ॥
Ibid., p.1256.
30. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ॥
Ibid., p.473.
31. *Ibid.*, pp.83, 91, 349, 1256, 1330.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Surjit Hans, *op.cit.*, p.38.
34. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp.7, 9-10, 15, 19, 23-24, 142, 351, 468, 504, 729, 751, 992, 1126.

35. *Ibid.*, pp.15 and 1256.
36. See Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, 'The Doctrinal Sovereignty of Sikhism' in *Sikhism And the 21st Century*, Pub. Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1997, pp.98-100.
37. See Harbans Singh, *Degh Tegh Fateh* (Socio-Economic and religio-political Fundamentals of Sikhism), Pub. Alam Publishing House, Chandigarh, 1986, p.19.
38. *Ibid.*, p.60.
39. Guru Nanak exhorts the people:
ਪਹਿਰੇ ਪਟੰਬਰ ਕਰਿ ਅਡੰਬਰ ਆਪਣਾ ਪਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਮਲੀਐ॥
(Let us deck ourselves with the silks of merits,
And adopt our arena i.e. fields of duties sticking to our ideal steadfastly)
Guru Granth Sahib, p.766.

40. ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਸੋ ਦਏਸੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਪ ਪਛਾਨਿਆ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹੈ ਅਵਰ ਨਹੀ ਦੂਜਾ॥
ਸਾਚੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਨ ਮਾਨਿਆ॥

Ibid., p.1330, also p.419.

Also:

ਮਨਿ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ਦੇਖੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਉਨੁ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਕਉਨੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ॥੩॥
ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਆਸਾ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਸਉਪਿ ਕੈ ਏਹੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੁ॥
ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਆ ਸੋਈ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸੋ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥

Ibid., p.1329.

41. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ॥
ਪੁਤ੍ਰੁ ਕਲਤ੍ਰੁ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ॥

Ibid., p.661.

42. ਜੋਗੀ ਭੋਗੀ ਕਾਪੜੀ ਕਿਆ ਭਵਹਿ ਦਿਸੰਤਰ॥
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨ੍ਹੀ ਤਤੁ ਸੜਰੁ ਨਿਰੰਤਰ॥
ਪੰਡਿਤ ਪਾਧੇ ਜੋਇਸੀ ਨਿਤ ਪੜ੍ਹਹਿ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਘਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਲੁਕਾਣਾ॥੪॥
ਇਕਿ ਤਪਸੀ ਬਨ ਮਹਿ ਤਪੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਿਤ ਤੀਰਥ ਵਾਸਾ॥
ਆਪੁ ਨ ਚੀਨਹਿ ਤਾਮਸੀ ਕਾਹੇ ਭਏ ਉਦਾਸਾ॥੫॥
ਇਕਿ ਬਿੰਦੁ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਿ ਰਾਖਦੇ ਸੇ ਜਤੀ ਕਹਾਵਹਿ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਨ ਛੂਟਹੀ ਭ੍ਰਮਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਜਾਵਹਿ॥
ਇਕਿ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਸੇਵਕ ਸਾਧਿਕਾ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਲਾਗੇ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਦ੍ਰੜੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਸੁ ਜਾਗੇ॥੬॥

ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਸੋ ਜਾਇ ਸਿਵਾਣੈ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਸਾਚੈ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ॥

Ibid., p.419.

43. *Ibid.*, pp.419, 661, 952, 1013, 1329, 1332.

44. ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਜੋ ਨਿਗੁਹੁ ਕਰੈ॥
ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਭੀਖਿਆ ਕਰੈ॥
ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਕਾ ਕਰੇ ਸਰੀਰੁ॥
ਸੋ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਗੰਗਾ ਕਾ ਨੀਰੁ॥

Ibid., p.952.

Also:

ਧਨੁ ਗਿਰਹੀ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਜੋਗੀ ਜਿ ਹਰਿ ਚਰਣੀ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਏ॥

Ibid., p.1013.

45. ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਹਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੋਹਿ॥

Ibid., p.1245.

46. ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਪੀਰੁ ਹਾਮਾ ਤਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਨ ਖਾਇ॥

Ibid., p.141.

47. See Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, 'The Doctrinal Sovereignty of Sikhism' in *Sikhism and The 21st Century*, Pub. Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1997, pp.110.

48. *Ibid.*, p.107.

49. *Ibid.*

50. ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਘਾਲਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p.8.

51. Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation), Introduction, p.lxxx.

52. See *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp.470-72, 663, 903, 951, 1191.

53. *Ibid.*, p.469.

54. *Ibid.*, p.473.

55. *Ibid.*, p.470.

56. *Ibid.*, p.472.

57. *Ibid.*, p.468.

58. *Ibid.*

58a. See *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 471, 468 and 471.

59. Guru Nanak says:
ਬੰਧਨ ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਹਉ ਕੀਆ॥

Ibid., p.416.

60. *Ibid.*, pp.467-68,470,635.

61. Guru Nanak warns:
ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਸਭਿ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਪਾਪ ਪੁੰਨ ਸਨਬੰਧੁ॥
ਮਮਤਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਸੁ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤੁ ਸੁ ਧੰਧੁ॥
ਜਹ ਦੇਖਾ ਤਹ ਜੇਵਰੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਕਾ ਸਨਬੰਧੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਵਰਤਣਿ ਵਰਤੈ ਅੰਧੁ॥

[Religions of rituals are mere entanglements; they form worldly bondage with what is classified as good or bad. They are performed for the sake of children and spouse, in ego and attachment, to form more attachments. wherever I look, I find the noose of attachment to Maya, says Nanak, without the True Name, the world is engrossed in blind entanglements].

Ibid., p.551.

Again the Guru reminds:

ਮਾਂਦਲੁ ਬੇਦਿ ਸਿ ਬਾਜਣੋ ਘਣੋ ਧੜੀਐ ਜੋਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਿ ਤੂ ਬੀਜਉ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥

[Most of the people are paying heed only to the bugle of *Karam Kaand* sounded by the scriptures such as Vedas. Says Nanak you should adopt the path of *Nam* as nothing else is so exquisite].

Ibid., p.1091.

Also:

ਖਟੁ ਕਰਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਈ॥

Ibid., p.1343.

ਜਿਤੁ ਕਰਮਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਭਾਈ ਸੁ ਆਤਮੁ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., p.635.

ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਫੋਕਟ ਸਭਿ ਕਰਮਾ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਜੀਗੁਰ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲੈ॥

Ibid., p.1343.

62. *Ibid.*, p.471-472.

63. *Ibid.*, p.18.

64. *Ibid.*, pp.556, 634, 637, 1241-42.

65. *Ibid.*, p.473.

66. *Ibid.*, p.472.

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*, p.471.

69. *Ibid.*, pp.468-471.

70. *Ibid.*, p.468.

71. J.S Grewal, *op.cit.* pp. 6-7.

72. Daljit Singh, *Essays...*p.94.

73. ਅਕਲੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਾਨੁ॥
ਅਕਲੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਿ ਕੈ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਕੀਚੈ ਦਾਨੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਆਖੈ ਰਾਹੁ ਏਹੁ ਹੋਰਿ ਗਲਾ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ॥

[By the use of discrimination of intellect one serves God. By the use of discrimination one is honoured. By intellect and study one understands things. It is the sense of discrimination that makes one charitable. This is the right way, rest is all wrong].

Guru Granth Sahib, p.1245.

74. *Ibid.*, p.107.

75. *Ibid.*, p.102.

76. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, *op.cit.*, p.111.

77. ਧੌਲੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੁ॥
ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਸੂਤਿ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p.3.

78. ਜਾਤਿ ਜਨਮ ਨਹ ਪੂਛੀਐ ਸਦ ਘਰੁ ਲੇਹੁ ਬਤਾਇ॥
ਸਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਸਾ ਪਤਿ ਹੈ ਜੇਹੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ॥

Ibid., p.1330.

79. 'Japuji' 16, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.4.

80. 'Var Asa' 10, *Ibid.*, pp.224-225.

81. 'Ramkali Dakhni', Onkar 49, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.937, also 'Gauri' Ast-7; *Ibid.*, p.223.

82. 'Var Asa', *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.468.

83. 'Asa' 39, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.360; 'Asa' Ast 11-12, p.417; 'Telang' 5, *Ibid.*, p.722.

84. (*Bhana or Hukam*)- see 'Maru Sohala' 14, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.1039.

85. Daljeet Singh, *Essays...*, p.96.

86. J.S. Grewal *op.cit.*, p.8.

87. Daljeet Singh, *Essays...*, p.103.

88. Guru Nanak affirms:

ਉਤਮ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਉਤਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ॥
ਗੁਣ ਕਉ ਧਾਵੈ ਅਵਗਣੁ ਧੋਵੈ॥

(In the company of the worthy, one becomes worthy having cleaned himself of blemishes, he hasten to achieve spiritual excellence).

Guru Granth Sahib, p.414.

89. *Langar* (community kitchen) was the most tangible expression of the idea of equality established by Guru Nanak. *Langar* is an integral part of the Sikh Gurdwara from where food is served to all regardless of caste or creed.
90. The *bani* sung devotionally in prescribed *ragas* preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music (i.e. *Rabab*, *Siranda*, *Sitar*, *Dilruba*, *Harmonium*, *Mirdang*, *Pakhawaj* and *Tabla* etc.) is called *Kirtan*. Under the guidance of Guru Nanak *Kirtan* became a means of strengthening the bonds that brought members of the rising Sikh community closer to one another. According to the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, *Kirtan* (of the authorised *bani*) sung devotionally in prescribed *ragas*, preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music, cleans the mind of all sensual impurities (*Guru Granth Sahib*, pp.289, 979, 1174); liberates man from the yoke of time and death (*Ibid.*, p.867) attracts divine pleasure (*Ibid.*, p.818) and leads him to emancipation (*Ibid.*, pp.297 and 747). It is considered as an effective agency for stopping the cycle of rebirths (*Ibid.*, p. 624). Often it is credited with the power of liquidating disease, sorrow and suffering (*Ibid.*, pp.213, 1085) and bringing about perfect peace of mind and bliss (*Ibid.*, pp.178, 926 and 962).

EDUCATIONAL THOUGHTS IN THE BANI OF GURU NANAK

T.S. Sodhi

Introduction

The philosophical grip of Guru Nanak on spiritual development was so firm that while dealing with historical, political, social, ethical and educational problems, he could work out their solutions, without loosening his grip on his main theme of the spirit. Even when it is a fact that in his *bani*, the central theme was always the spirit, yet his treatment of other disciplines, including that of education was in no way, incomplete. It was rather done with similar type of accuracy and precision. The beauty of his thought process lies in the way with which he dealt with all aspects of education with very deep insight and did full justice to it, without taking the spiritual development to the background.

As the main theme of his work was the spirit, so he used all other disciplines as pillars to support it. While doing so, he fragmented other disciplines, with such an accuracy and precision that no part of any one of these gave the look of incompleteness and also no part of the main theme was wasted. He fitted them in such an artistic way that sometimes, one pillar was used to support so many ideas i.e. one thought process was used in more than one discipline. While dealing with education, he kept the spirit at the forefront and fragmented the discipline of education into pieces of different size and dimensions and used it to build up his theme of spiritual development in such accurate way that neither any aspect of the discipline of education remained untouched, nor any part of it was given a superficial treatment, nor the

main theme was reduced to the second position. In this way his educational thoughts were scattered in all his 974 hymns compiled in the *Adi Granth* and authenticated by Guru Arjan, the Fifth Guru who got it compiled under his guidance and supervision.

If one is to work on the educational thoughts of Guru Nanak, he will have to use the historical and philosophical methods of research. The only choice with the scholar will be to get insight into his *bani* and then to collect the thoughts on different aspects of the discipline of education under different sub-headings, put these into a system and draw scientific inferences upon all of them and then reach on respective conclusions. This can further be supported by his life style and the works carried out by other researchers. However, it seems that only a few investigations have been carried out on educational thoughts of Guru Nanak and the area has been lying untouched. Some of his important *banis* compiled in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* are as under:

(a) *Japuji* (b) *Asa di Var* (c) *Sidha Goshti* (d) *Barahmah Tukhari* (e) *Dakhni Onkar* (f) *Majh di Var* (g) *Malar di Var* (h) *Sodar and Sohila* (i) *Alahuniyan*, (j) *Babar Bani*.

Educational Philosophy

It is difficult to fix up the educational thoughts of Guru Nanak in any one kind of educational philosophy of the West. He had idealistic thoughts, believed in nationalistic tendencies and provided pragmatic solutions on almost all the problems of education. However, if he is to be fixed up in any one school of thought, he can be termed as an idealist as his ultimate aim of education was to become "*Sachiara*" and to be one with Him. Only this type of frame will accommodate his thought process to a considerable extent. In all his writings, actions and deeds, his concentration was on 'The Ultimate'. It is apparent that in the field of education, full justice has been done with social development, cultural building up, emotional maturity, personality make up, truthful living along with spiritual emancipation. It has been observed that his thoughts have

multi-dimensional bearings i.e. the same idea has been used for social, spiritual, cultural, ethical as well as educational development in thought process. It goes to his credit to reduce the most complicated process of spiritual development to three fundamentals i.e. *Nam Japna* (to pray), *Vand Chhakna* (to share surplus with the needy) and *Kirt Karna* (to work hard).

Guru Nanak has worked out a complete philosophy of education, which he has not only inter-woven in his *bani*, but also demonstrated in his actions, deeds and life style. He wrote what he felt, he spoke as he conceptualised, he acted towards the Ultimate Truth and demonstrated to clarify the concepts of those who came in touch with him. Thus his living, thinking, feeling, doing and writing were in line with one and other and there is little variations in it. There is hardly any aspect of education, which has remained untouched by him in his works. His treatment of the problems and his working out of their solutions is so sophisticated that it seems to be as significant today as these were in his times. He worked on the theme of spiritual emancipation. About it Avinashilingam *et.al.* (1975) has written:

The great need of our educational system and our educational institutions is inculcation of spiritual ideas along with technological knowledge. Man with mere material knowledge becomes selfish and self centred. Therefore, the present need is to give social purpose to education, so that educated people will not be exploiters of the not so fortunate but be friends and helpers of the poor, the weak and the down trodden and be dedicated servants of our country and people. A deep look into it makes it amply clear that almost the similar theme of social aspect of the behaviour was developed by Guru Nanak in his *bani*, *Sidha Goshti*.

Aims of Education

The main theme of Guru was spiritual development and to prepare a man for *Mukti* (salvation), *Jugti* (art of living), *Tripti*

(satisfaction of life of self-fulfilment) and *Bhakti* (joy of life or bliss). In his own words the man was to become *Sachiara* or *Gurmukh* in his life time. His model of education has been demonstrated in *Pauri 13* of *Japuji Sahib* i.e., if one brings faith in Him, at first his spirit is developed, which is followed by one's development of emotions, which further leads to the development of intellect. Thus the model is as under:

Spiritual Development-----> Emotional Development----->
Intellectual Development.

For this purpose Guru Nanak placed emphasis upon truthful living and laid down:

Truth is higher but still higher is truthful living.¹

In order to develop the man to the level of *Sachiara* he added to the aim of being one with Him, the spiritual development, spiritual emancipation, self realisation, character formation, moral development, humility, truthful living, simplicity, honesty, restraint on lust for passion and money, purity and cleanliness, intellectual development, service, social uplift, respect for womanhood and down trodden etc. However, he did not load his writings with unnecessary difficult terminology but made it so simple that an ordinary man in the street could grasp it. For example:

The more we think about education, the more the good will be done.²

Again he puts it in simple terminology:

If a literate man is the sinner, an illiterate saint is punished not in his stead,

for as are the deeds of a man, so is he known.

Why play then a such play through which One loseth in the True Court.

Yea, the literate as the illiterate are to be considered in the Yond.
And he who follows his mind's will, shall suffer hereafter³.

Again, about acquiring virtues, he writes:

Nanak, as many are the vices, so many are the chains around
our neck.

Yea, one removeth vice with virtues,
for virtue is our only friend.⁴

Curriculum

Even though he was an idealistic, he did not ignore scientific subjects and placed equal emphasis on them too. In fact, whole of the Universe and all beyond Universe are included in his curriculum. The spirit was to be so elevated that it paved its way to the Ultimate, and at the same time paid its debt to the society which had brought him up. In the curriculum of Guru Nanak, no doubt, philosophy and ethics have a higher place in hierarchy, but science will have its own important place. One was to be taught to live a full married life and still to focus upon the elevation of spirit. This process has been explained by giving the examples of the Lotus flower (*Kanwal*) and feathers of *Murgabi* (a floating bird) who live in water but water cannot make them wet:

As the lotus in the water is not wet,
nor the fowl sporting in a stream.⁵

In the married life, the fatherhood, and husbandhood were to be so cultivated that they all strengthened the path for the elevation of spirit rather than to make the process more difficult. The primary place will have to be given to the subjects like philosophy, history, ethics, morals, language etc. However, science will have to be taught, but its place will be subordinated to the subjects of humanities and languages. In the present era, we have developed science without developing spirit, ethics, moral and social fibre, the results have been disastrous

i.e., Hiroshima was destroyed leaving shocking memories for the next many generations. Even, if now we continue to explore the area of scientific excellence for preparing drastic arms, without being subordinating the excellence to the social welfare, it is feared that the world will soon face total destruction. The subordination of sciences to philosophy, so beautifully inter-woven by Guru Nanak, is again leading the big powers to destroying some of the deadly war weapons. However, they need to do so with the dedication and sincerity which was inculcated by Guru Nanak. Thus the curriculum of the thought process of Guru Nanak is to pave a way for the spiritual development for which philosophy, social sciences and humanities will get preference in the curriculum over science subjects, which too will be taught, as all the realities of physics and metaphysics will have to be brought home to those who have the wisdom to appreciate the educational efforts of the great saint. He has beautifully said:

And through the Guru's word, Realise his self.
Yea, he, at the Lord's Door, is Approved,
through the True Word⁶.

Discipline

Guru Nanak was for self-imposed discipline rather than authoritarian discipline. This self-imposed or auto-discipline was in accordance with the value system, in which the aim was to take a lead from higher values till one is disciplined enough for being one with Him. For example all were to lead a family life with sex confined to only the life partner. Guru Nanak not only wrote about it, but demonstrated it through his own living. This was to be done by the individual by confining to the limits laid down i.e; *Sanjam* (to do it to the limited extent):

Thou has conduct and contemplation,
If thou dwelled on Lord's Name,
This is; the self-discipline, meditation and austere living.⁷

In the same way the edict is to speak less, sleep less, eat less and to work more. The work more, again is confined to, work to the capacity, so as to create surpluses which again, are to be spent on the welfare of the needy, depressed, and suppressed sections of the society:

He alone, O Nanak , knows the right way of living,
who earns his livelihood with the sweat of brow,
and then share it with his fellow human beings.⁸

At first, one is to earn and to earn with honest means by working hard to the capacity and then to create surplus so as to utilize them for those who have nobody to look after them. All these values are essential ingredients of educational process of Guru Nanak and are a must for human societies. Work hard is fundamental, one can look to Japan which is leading in the world economy because of her hard work i.e., work to capacity. In accordance with the thought process of Guru Nanak, the World Bank and the U.N.O are playing the role of spending the world surpluses for the underdeveloped nations of the world.

Guru Nanak's discipline, no doubt, is self discipline, and it is without any fear from the outside world. This fearlessness again is of the type in which he could talk and condemn a barbarous king like Babar. About it the Guru complained to the Lord:

Thou, O Creator-Lord, hast protected Khurasan, and Hindustan
Thou hast terrified.

Thou takest not the blame on Thyself, and so hast made
the Mughal the angel of Death.⁹

Guru Nanak was for creating such an atmosphere for the learned people that they could discuss and convinced those who were off the track. For example, he discussed it with Siddhas and convinced them to follow his path without imposing any compulsion upon them. He enlightened the *Qazi* to go in for disciplined prayers where in all his

effort was upon the concentration upon Allah. He could enlighten the people and teach them that God is Omnipresent. This type of discipline he wanted to be introduced by the enhancement of value system and enlightenment of the soul. To be kind, humble and truthful is the essence of all good things.¹⁰

Methods of teaching

His pedagogy was coined to suit the type of men to whom he was to convey his thought or message. He used all levels of teaching right from the memory level to the reflective level. He could demonstrate, the understanding level strategies to the masses at Hardwar, by pouring water towards the West and telling them that if they could send water to their fore-fathers who had died long before, why he could not be able to send the water to his fields which were only a few hundred miles away. While clarifying the concepts of intellectuals i.e. Sufis, Saints and *Mullah's* at Multan, he used the methodology of reflective level of teaching which was appropriate to them i.e., intellectuals. They sent a tumbler full of milk to him to indicate that the place was full of saints and *faqirs*. Guru Nanak put a Jasmine flower upon it, to communicate at reflective level that he could also be accommodated amongst them in the same way in which the tumbler had accommodated the Jasmine flower. One can find that Guru Nanak, while communicating at the same level i.e., reflective level, did not use the same techniques to the groups of Siddhas, who had many more problems and misconceptions to be clarified. He used the technique of *Goshti* which can be termed as question answer technique or discussion method at understanding level. He discussed each problem threadbare and brought them home the misconception they had about their life style. He educated them to work for the society, down trodden and women folk, and thus to contribute to the achievement of *Mokash* for them. Similarly, Guru Nanak, at school, clarified the concept of Pandit and enlightened him to go in for the true knowledge. For the masses who had lesser knowledge and understanding, he used the memory level and showed them the track of

Simran. His methods of teaching were appropriate to the situation and the people with whom he was to deal and these were manifold, varied and praise worthy. If one looks deeply into the technique of discussion in *Sidha Goshti*, he can find the ingredients of programmed instruction used in it.

T.R. Sharma has beautifully put it when he says:

Nanak was never a school master but he was a great teacher of mankind. Although his classes were large and his students were countless, yet he succeeded in putting across his pupils all that he wanted to do; and his method of teaching so effective and lovingly impressive, that his lessons have become universal and everlasting.

He made use of all the methods of teaching which were appropriate to the situation. He used the Divine Method, Psychological Method, Scientific Method and Logic Method. In addition, one can find that he made use of Free Observation Method or Travelling Method, Question Answer Method, Dramatisation, Activity Method, Project Method, Story telling Method, Mass Drill Recitation, Self Study Method and Correlation Method. In the words of D.N. Khosla:

....The Guru always taught the people to realise all their willing, feeling and doing to the divine purpose and as such whether it was an economic or social activity, a cultural or political one, a worldly or a spiritual one, it was always sought to be judged and correlated in terms of attaining it to the divine truth.

He developed the non-formal type of education and introduced through the media of *Pangat*, *Sangat*, *Sewa*, *Langar* etc., so as to make people devoted to the society and become truthful and humble. He not only embodied it in his *bani* but demonstrated it in his own life style also.

Teacher

A man has to learn at memory level and engage himself in coded prayer i.e., *Nam Simran*. Guru Nanak showered respect, regards, praise and benevolence upon teachers. He has given his qualities, which are very significant i.e., enlightenment, spiritual, intellectual, learned, sympathetic, emotionally mature, socially respected etc. He has given such a treatment to it that with all the facilities, economic benefits etc., the society in the present era has not been able to provide even a fraction of what Guru Nanak showered upon them. It is perhaps why that neither are there any teachers of the concept of Guru Nanak nor such respect and regards exist for them in the social set up and cultural background. He has, in fact, anticipated some of the qualities of *Sat Guru* and *Wah Guru* (God) in a teacher. A teacher is one who has, in fact, at least started proceeding upon the path of spiritual enlightenment and is very close to the *Almighty*:

The Pandit is well read only, if he reflects the Word all for spontaneously.¹¹

If the educational process of the concept of Guru Nanak is to be inferred in any society, the status and qualities of the *guru* depicted in the *bani* of Guru Nanak, will have to be restored and hardly any teacher of the day will attain this significance and status. The idea of raising the status of the teacher by providing him economic benefits, is not in accordance with the thoughts of Guru Nanak, who did not oppose it either. His touch, his looks, his movements are to be simple but graceful and his thirst for knowledge unlimited and deep. His own life, his own actions, his own mode of living, his behaviour and his simplicity are all to be educative and worth copying.

In *Rag Basant*, Guru Nanak has summarised by writing:

Let (disinterested) works be trunks,
the Lord's (Name) the branches, righteousness the flowers, and
gnosis the fruit,

And Attainment the leaves,
 and the purging of the mind's ego the shade.
 See thou, thy (Lord's) power with thy eyes,
 hear His word with thy ears, and utter the True name through thy
 mouth,
 Yea, thiswise are the goods of Glory assembled,
 and one is Attuned to God in a state of Poise.
 The months and the season (of spring) will surely dawn:
 Practice thou the Deeds and see.
 Sayeth Nanak: "That which Blossoms thiswise withers not again,
 and he, by the Guru's Grace, Mergeth in God"¹².

He placed him to the height which is difficult to be imagined these
 days when he said:

Without Guru the knowledge cannot be acquired¹³.

Needless to say that teaching of his concept was a mission and
 now it has become a profession. However, this profession even now
 needs to have some ingredients of missionary spirit and dedication.

Educational Problems

When educational philosophy of Guru Nanak is understood in
 correct perspective, which is not so difficult to grasp, as he has written
 for the masses, used the language of the masses (Punjabi), adopted
 symbols of the masses (agrarian). It becomes evidently clear that
 he had also conceptualised the present day educational problems and
 worked out their solutions. These solutions were as true in ~~those days~~
 as are in the present era. Many of the new concepts of education,
 have been conceptualised by him. In the present era only new termi-
 nology seems to have been used for the old concepts already coined by
 Guru Nanak. For example, 'the Life Long Education' has been beau-
 tifully explained by him in his *bani* and life also, while it is being thought

as a new dimension added to the discipline of education. He was the one who passed on the *Guru Gadi* i.e., the Guruship, to the second Guru in old age and created the institution of Guruship which was carried forward by his followers. The selection was to be made on the test of merit, commitment and service so much so it was passed on to Guru Amar Das the third Guru at the age of 72 years. It is why that in *Gurbani*, it has been made clear that *Gurmukhs* never grow old, indicating thereby that their educational process never comes to an end in their life time.¹⁴

Similarly, the concept of Adult Education which too is considered to be a modern dimension of education, has been given a prominent place both in the life process and *bani* of Guru Nanak. The *bani* written by him has been created to clarify the concepts of adults and to make it clear to them that the only path to improve upon the quality of life thought process, elevation of soul and living a full married life, in accordance with the faith of Guru Nanak, is that all adults need to be educated and educated in the real sense by discriminating between book learning and education. During whole of his life, whenever or wherever he has discussed, educated, changed, emphasized and improved, the other person was mostly an adult. His concept of *Langar* (free community Kitchen) and *Pangat* and *Sangat* (congregation) is meant to improve upon the adults and their value system. In case the value system was established amongst the adults it could filter down to the younger generation too. This view has been expressed by the Education Commission (1964-66), New Policy of Education (1986), Review Committee Report (1990) and Report of the CAGE Committee on Policy (1992) in India and almost all the reports on Adult Education brought out by UNESCO. So adult education and non-formal education already conceived, practised and emphasised by Guru Nanak are being advocated by the educationists in the present era. Education has another important role to play in the sphere of broadening the concepts of the people on matters concerning international understand-

ing and humanity. All societies of the world are dependent upon one another in one way or the other i.e., economically, socially, politically, culturally and also emotionally. It is thus essential that the misconceptions of the masses be removed about nationalistic interest being in clash with international understanding and things should be so smoothened that people should lay emphasis upon international understanding and welfare of the humanity, rather than narrow religious, national and economic interests. It is towards this end that UNO, World Bank and International Monetary Fund are working. Guru Nanak was of the view that:

All belong to Thee, O Lord, Thou belongest to all,

O, whom shall we call bad, when there's not another without Thee.¹⁵

For this purpose different sections of the world community, are encouraged to travel abroad, to get familiar with diversified cultures, goodness and to realise that different nations are inter-dependent for developmental process. Guru Nanak, in his own times not only raised a crusade against narrow religious values but set an example by travelling on foot so widely in India and some of the neighbouring countries. He criticised even Babur the Great, for his cruelties. It is here that our institutions are to play their role against injustice, brutality, cruelty if it comes from any social, political or Government agencies and also to protest against threats from world powers to international peace at international levels. However, it is to be based on ethics, morals, values, truth, goodness and wider concept of humanity rather than narrow political considerations as is being done today. Guru Nanak, throughout his life, did as much to reform Indians as he did to reform people living in Mecca and Madina and else where too. His *Udasis*, his works, his actions, his *bani*, his treatment of the masses and his devotion to the human cause are all embodied in his overall treatment of the humanity. His concept of the elevation of the soul and spirit are deep rooted into his educational understanding.

Guru Nanak laid stress upon the non-formal system of education and himself worked on it. Now in this era, when education is meant for all, scholars like Illich and Reumer have come forward with their thesis of "De Schooling the Society" and "The School is Dead" so that the children could get education in a non-formal way. It is to be pointed out here that if all are to be educated to their capacity, it will be beyond the reach of wealthy countries like U.S.A. to finance it, not to talk of developing nations like India.

Guru Nanak introduced the concept of teaching through the mother tongue. Although all scholarly works in his times were carried out in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, yet he himself wrote in the language of the masses, used symbols of the masses, discussed in the language of the masses and worked out their solutions in the language of the masses.

Guru Nanak was able to introduce the spirit of service (*Sewa*) amongst the masses.¹⁶ Even today, the highest placed Sikhs enjoy to do *sewa* with dedication and spirit. It brings purity, humbleness, truth, goodness and above all it trains the hands with work-ethics. All these qualities are the needs of our society which has been classified to be one of the corrupt nations of the world. The concept of social service or National Service is now being introduced in our educational system, through the media of National Service Scheme, which is a poor substitute of the spirit of service introduced in the social set up by Guru Nanak.

One of the problems being faced by our society is that of religious harmony, so as to cultivate national integration. It is a matter of pity that issues like 'Ram Janam Bhumi' and 'Babri Masjid' have been raised even after 50 years of our independence. The communal riots are not uncommon and worst was the genocide of Sikhs in 1984 in Delhi and many other cities. Guru Nanak has shown the path of emotional and religious integration and during his life time established it to the extent that after his death, it is said, both the Hindus and the Muslims

laid their claims on his dead body. His *modus operandi* was to teach Muslims to be true Muslim and to educate Hindus to become true Hindus and to shun hypocrisy. To Muslims he said:

Five prayers, five times a day with five different names,
 Make the first prayer the truth,
 and second to lawfully earn your daily bread,
 the third charity in the name of God,
 fourth purity of mind and let good deeds be your articles of faith,
Kalmas.

Then you can call yourself a truly Muslim. By the practice of hypocrisy, Nanak, A man is deemed false through-through.¹⁷

While dealing with the Hindu 'Sidhas' he told them:

Ascetism does not lie in the ascetic roles, nor in the walking staff,
 nor in the ashes.

Ascetism does not lie in the ear-ring, nor in the shaven head, nor
 in blowing a conch.

Ascetism lies in remaining pure amongst impurities.¹⁸

He made a thorough study of both the religions and preached the masses to be true to their own pure faith.

If we are to cultivate the religious harmony and national integration, we will have to get a clue from Guru Nanak and establish a society in which people while having full faith in their religions will develop the highest regard for other faiths and to shun religious hypocrisy. This type of ethics will have to be developed in a secular society like ours and we will feel like Guru Nanak:

All belong to Thee, O Lord
 Thou Belongest to all
 Whom shall we call bad,

When there's non without Thee.¹⁹

Leaving aside the technological developments, which have been introduced in the field of education as a result of the process of Industrial Revolution there is no other problem of education, which has not been touched by Guru Nanak in his *bani* and whose solution has not been worked out by him.

Need of the Hour

It will be difficult to deny that our education system is not proving to be very useful to us. When we try to solve one problem, so many other problems crop up and we continue to be in dismal position. One of its reason could be that it has not grown out of the surface of our motherland i.e., history, geography, politics, social and cultural ethics. Our approach till now has been that of borrowing from other countries i.e., U.K., U.S.A., Japan, Russia etc., for the improvement of our system. This approach too has not proved to be fruitful and the result is that our social set up has gone very corrupt and there seems to be no way out. There is a need to understand from the investigations like that of Sadler who is termed as the father of Comparative Education, and has laid down:

We cannot wonder at pleasure amongst the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden and picking off a flower from one level and some leaves from another and expects that if gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant. A national system of education is a living thing. It has in it some of the secrets working of national life. It reflects while seeking to remedy, the failing of national character.

It seems that we have not learnt from our failures and have still been borrowing from other cultures. This is not going to prove to be fruitful to us. The need of the hour is that we should put our heart and soul together and carry our scientific investigations on the works of our thinkers like Guru Nanak and put their findings into practice and mould

our educational system accordingly. It is hoped that this approach will help us to build up our educational system on firm footings. Our teacher training programme should enlighten our teacher trainees with the work of our philosophers in a more dignified way. It is a matter of pity that Guru Nanak has not been given the recognition of an educational thinker, which he so richly deserved. When we try to compare his ideas with any of the educational thinkers of Indian origin, we find it difficult to place our finger on any one and yet we are to introduce him as an educational thinker in our teacher training programme in our universities.

Although researchers have started to explore the Educational Philosophy of Guru Nanak, the amount of research carried on his *bani* for the time being is only insignificant. It is high time that organisations like Guru Nanak Dev University, Punjabi University, NCERT and Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, University Grants Commission etc., should come up with some research projects to explore the educational implications of the *bani* of Guru Nanak in a big way and put those findings into practice in their educational policy so that our educational system prove fruitful to us.

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Guru Granth Sahib, p.62.

2. ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., p.356.

3. ਪੜਿਆ ਹੋਵੈ ਗੁਨਹਗਾਰੁ ਤਾ ਓਮੀ ਸਾਧੁ ਨ ਮਾਰੀਐ॥
ਜੇਹਾ ਘਾਲੇ ਘਾਲਣਾ ਤੇਵੇਹੋ ਨਾਉ ਪਚਾਰੀਐ॥
ਐਸੀ ਕਲਾ ਨ ਖੇਡੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਦਰਗਹ ਗਇਆ ਹਾਰੀਐ॥
ਪੜਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਓਮੀਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ਅਗੈ ਵੀਚਾਰੀਐ॥
ਮੁਹਿ ਚਲੈ ਸੁ ਅਗੈ ਮਾਰੀਐ॥੧੨॥

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ਜੁ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਨਿ ਤ ਕਟੀਅਨਿ ਸੇ ਭਾਈ ਸੇ ਵੀਰ॥

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8. ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ॥
Ibid., p. 1245.
9. ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੁ ਡਰਾਇਆ॥
ਆਪੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚੜਾਇਆ॥
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10. ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮਿ ਮਨੁ ਬੋਧਿਆ ਅਵਰੁ ਕਿ ਕਰੀ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਰਾਤਉ ਸੁਖ ਸਾਰੁ
ਜਿਤੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤਿਉ ਰਾਖੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰੁ॥੧॥
ਮਨ ਰੇ ਸਾਚੀ ਖਸਮ ਰਜਾਇ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਸਾਜਿ ਸੀਗਾਰਿਆ ਤਿਸੁ ਸੇਤੀ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥
ਤਨੁ ਬੈਸੰਤਰਿ ਹੋਮੀਐ ਇਕ ਰਤੀ ਤੋਲਿ ਕਟਾਇ॥
ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਸਮਧਾ ਜੇ ਕਰੀ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਅਗਨਿ ਜਲਾਇ॥
ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੈ ਤੁਲਿ ਨ ਪੁਜਈ ਜੇ ਲਖ ਕੋਟੀ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ॥੨॥
ਅਰਧ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਕਟਾਈਐ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਰਵਤੁ ਧਰਾਇ॥
ਤਨੁ ਹੈਮੰਚਲਿ ਗਾਲੀਐ ਭੀ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ॥
ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੈ ਤਲਿ ਨ ਪੁਜਈ ਸਭ ਛਿਠੀ ਠੋਕਿ ਵਜਾਇ॥੩॥
ਕੰਚਨ ਕੇ ਕੋਟ ਦਤੁ ਕਰੀ ਬਹੁ ਹੈਵਰ ਗੈਵਰ ਦਾਨੁ॥
ਭੂਮਿ ਦਾਨੁ ਗਢ੍ਹਿਆ ਘਣੀ ਭੀ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਗਰਬੁ ਗੁਮਾਨੁ॥
ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮਿ ਮਨੁ ਬੋਧਿਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਦੀਆ ਸਚੁ ਦਾਨੁ॥੪॥
ਮਨਹਠ ਬੁਧੀ ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕੇਤੇ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰ॥
ਕੇਤੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਜੀਅ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰ॥
ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ॥੫॥
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ਮਾਹਾ ਰੁਤੀ ਆਵਣਾ ਵੇਖਹੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰੇ ਨ ਸੁਕਹੀ ਜਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਰਹੇ ਸਮਾਇ॥
Ibid., p. 1168.

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ਪਹਿਲਾ ਸਚੁ ਹਲਾਲ ਦੁਇ ਤੀਜਾ ਖੈਰ ਖੁਦਾਇ॥
ਚਉਥੀ ਨੀਅਤਿ ਰਾਜਿ ਮਨੁ ਪੰਜਵੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਨਾਇ॥
ਕਰਣੀ ਕਲਮਾ ਆਖਿ ਕੈ ਤਾ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਸਦਾਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਜੇਤੇ ਕੂੜਿਆਰ ਕੂੜੇ ਕੂੜੀ ਪਾਇ॥
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ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਮੁੰਦੀ ਮੁੰਡਿ ਮੁਡਾਇਐ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਸਿੰਝੀ ਵਾਈਐ॥
ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਚੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ॥
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GURU NANAK'S MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION: AN EXPERIMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PANJABI LANGUAGE

Madanjit Kaur

It is a historical fact, that a movement of men in medieval India helped to spread an ideology far beyond its home-land. The origin of Sikhism took place in the period when India passed through a process of cultural transition. The concepts, signs, imagery and symbols of spiritual and secular communication used in the *bani* of Guru Nanak are evidence of historical process of cultural fusion, social and political change which took place in the contemporary society.

There is a considerable vocabulary preserved in the devotional poetry of Guru Nanak from Muslim and Indo - Aryan languages including areas of religion, philosophy, mysticism, mythology, legends, folk-lore, administration and law. Even vocabulary from the more common concerns of life as well as literary forms in their current usage belonging to fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have been used. Therefore, the socio - cultural relevance of the contents of the text of Guru Nanak's teachings may provide a documentary evidence of the inheritance of the cultural history of medieval Punjab in context to world civilization.

Guru Nanak was a prophet with "Global Vision" and humanitarian spirit. The universalism of the teachings of Guru Nanak can be easily gauged from the selection of his medium of propagation. He did not preach his message through the languages of the *Vedas* and the *Quran*.

The knowledge of Sanskrit (the language of the *Vedas*) and the knowledge of Arabic (language of the *Quran*) was confined only to a section of society. The majority of Indians were unfamiliar with both the languages. Guru Nanak was very much concerned with the spiritual emancipation and social uplift of the common man. He spread his message (of love of God and brotherhood of man) in a language, easily comprehensible to the common man.

Right from the Vedic period Sanskrit had enjoyed the status of religious language of India. The local dialects held the status of folk-language. It were the Sufis who made pioneering attempts in the usage of vernaculars for religious purpose. They adopted local dialects as their medium of communication. But it remained a medium of communication and did not acquire the status of their religious language. No religious scriptures were written in these dialects. Generally, the Sufis continued the old tradition of saying their prayer, performing their rituals and ceremonies in Arabic.

Before Guru Nanak, the Naths and Siddhas had also used local languages. Kabir's language was also folk-language. But it was used for propagation, and not for religion. Guru Nanak adopted the folk-language. But he went a step ahead and further advanced its usage both for propagation and for religion.

It is the greatest contribution of Guru Nanak that he selected local language as medium¹ for religion, *bhakti*, philosophy and propagation.

The language of Guru Nanak has a wider perspective. His message was not only for the Punjabis exclusively. His message was for the common welfare of the humanity. It was a universal proposition². The geographical factor affects only the shades and forms of the language but not the essence of the message.³

Guru Nanak was a multi-linguist. With the support of classical languages he developed local dialects and merged them cohesively into

a literary language. The form given to this composition by the Guru was the demand of his time. Therefore the medium of communication of Guru Nanak's teachings can be treated as an index of the cultural level of the sixteenth century Indian society. His *bani* is an evidence of the popularized forms of Sanskrit and Apabhramsh with similarly treated words of Persian and Arabic, sometimes adhering to Braji forms and at other times to the later Khari Boli whose patterns are parallel to Punjabi and modern Hindi.⁴

Guru Nanak made extensive use of all these language forms. The emphasis vary, according to the requirement of the context and mode of the theme. But the basic structure of his language--cultural fusion remains. The Braji character of the Hindi got greatly diluted by an overlay of the Panjabi spoken form. This language characteristic is visible in the *bani* of Guru Nanak except in compositions cast more predominantly into Panjabi mould.⁵

Although cultural traditions and universal values have been upheld by Guru Nanak yet he rebelled against the rigidity of religious language. His language is not sectarian. It is secular and free from formalism, orthodoxy, and other characteristics of cultural restraints. At certain places he had freely adopted Sanskrit and Apabhramsh but at other places he had protested against them. He also condemned the adoption of the language of the *malechh* (the aliens) by the Indians out of fashion.⁶ Similarly, he had protested against the use of Sanskrit language as the only prescribed medium of religious communication.

His major concern is spiritual. Therefore, the basic theme of his teaching is *bhakti*. But in his *bhakti* and religious communication secular language has been used. He has used domestic and homely vocabulary for spiritual and philosophical purpose. It is the language of the masses, the peasantry and the folk. The subtle and abstract philosophical concepts and the communication of spiritual experience have been expressed in common man's language for the better

understanding of the people. His *Barah Mah* is a unique example of folk-literature and agrarian terminology of his time. The expression belongs to Nanak but the language belongs to the folk.

It is clear from the *bani* of Guru Nanak that there is an emotional co-relation of the language with the theme in the context of his preaching. Generally, in compositions expressive of contemplation and philosophical thought, Hindi is predominantly employed. In the expression of deep personal feelings of devotion (which is one of the forms of *bhakti* in his *bani*), the more intimate Panjabi expression predominates.⁷ The compositions more prominently Panjabi in character are found in Guru Nanak's *bani* such as in *Alahuniyan*⁸ and *Pahre*.⁹ However, the predominance of Panjabi is visible in his *bani* everywhere, even in composition like *Siddha gosht*¹⁰ with a pronounced Hindi character. Sometimes his Panjabi compositions are expressed with the touch of Hindi close to the Khari Boli, on the whole there is an overwhelming influence of Panjabi which provided Guru Nanak's own linguistic background and medium of expression. Thus Hindi and Panjabi with its admixture of philosophical terminology derived from Sanskrit on the one hand and Persian and Arabic in the current folk-form on the other, are the main linguistic warp and woof of his *bani*.¹¹

In special contexts, Yogic, Brahmanical or Muslim doctrinal terminology may predominate. Guru Nanak has composed some of his compositions in a language, which is predominantly Sanskrit, probably in contexts where the message was meant for the Hindu *bhaktas* and Sants outside the language range of Panjabi and Hindi. It is a well known fact that a variety of Sanskrit was the universal medium of exchange of serious thought in the sixteenth century India.

Besides, a variety of folk-forms have been used. Again there is the use of symbolical and metaphorical language. A part of it is inheritance from the mystical poetry of India. Some of the symbolic

usage and idiom, is an original contribution of Guru Nanak. Terminology from Indian religious traditions has been adopted by Guru Nanak and at certain places it has been given a special orientation. 'Thus *Akal Purakh*, *Ek Onkar*, *Kartar*, *Sati Nam* etc. despite their derivation from Sanskrit are employed in the *bani* of Guru Nanak with a connotation all their own.'¹² For example the term *Guru*, which in most contexts stands for the human spiritual preceptor, but signifies also to the Supreme Being. Similarly, esoteric terms like *Nam*, *Sabda*, *gurmukh* and yogic terminology, employed to symbolize the spiritual and ethical attainment, present quite a different meaning in comprehension and explication.¹³ Another example is *Karam*, it may stand for good fortune made by one's good actions, or may even mean human actions. It would be the connotation only if the term is derived from Sanskrit. If it is Arabic-based, it would mean 'Divine Grace'. Therefore, for a better comprehension of the *bani* of Guru Nanak we have to take into consideration its structure and syntax.¹⁴

The specific feature of his *bani* is to convey human, emotional and sentimental response to particular situations in different times and places which has a universal appeal to have a great impact on Indian civilization. The language of Guru Nanak's *bani* is basically the language of emotion (*bhava*). The poet Guru expresses his emotion in different moods and tones. Its expression (*abhivayakti*) is natural humanistic and universal in form and mode. Usually it is simple, direct, spontaneous and effective. But sometimes it is difficult, full of anguish and resentment. For example, the *Babar bani* expresses anger, protest and agony of the Guru at the atrocities of a foreign invader.¹⁵ Sometimes, the language of the Guru is a severe attack nailing down exploitation, administrative corruption and injustice. The language of certain hymns in *Asa di var*, is very harsh.¹⁶

In some of his hymns the depth of his sentiment is expressed in a mixed language. The expression in *Vadhans*¹⁷ and *Tukhari*¹⁸ is highly emotional. The language is neither purely Panjabi nor Hindi, nor Braj.

similarly, the medium of expression of *Salok Sahaskriti*¹⁹ is inter-mixture of classical languages with the local dialects to convey a difficult philosophical theme. It is clear from the above mentioned examples that the religious expression of Guru Nanak was not confined to any one form of language. It presents a complex but integrated phenomena of protest, adoption and assimilation. And this factor contributes to the inbuilt trait of universal appeal in the *bani* of Guru Nanak.

The *bani* of Guru Nanak is addressed to a variety of audience in different styles with different modes of address (*sambodhan*). This imparts a mass appeal to the teachings of Guru Nanak. The *bani* of the Guru is addressed either to an audience or a disciple. The Guru has used his expressions according to the terms and concepts of the proposed audience. For example when he is addressing a *Pandit*, the language used is Hindi, Braj or Sanskrit. In the case of a *Mullah* or *Qazi* it is Persian or Arabic. Similarly, in the case of Nath, Yogis or Sants he has used Sant Bhakha (see *Babar bani*²⁰, *Sidh Gosht*²¹ etc.). In many hymns the language of the Guru is that of auto-suggestion. We find a number of *sabads* beginning with '*re-mann*' (ਰੈ ਮਨ) where the poet Guru addresses himself²². All this expressive variety has been used to communicate his message to larger sections of the society.

The language of Guru Nanak has some similarities with the radical *bhaktas*. The radical *bhaktas* Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas etc. belonged to low castes. The impact of their social milieu is evident in the languages of their preachings. We find a low level of language and ruggedness in their compositions. Guru Nanak belonged to a higher caste and he was an educated person of his time. The impact of his social milieu is clearly perceptible in the sophistication of his language. The Guru identified himself with the lowliest of low, humbled down himself and led a successful mission of preaching a universal religion.²³

There is a rhythm and metre in the language of Guru Nanak. Guru

Nanak endowed music with a spiritual and devotional touch. The use of music by Guru Nanak as a spiritual uplifter, and as an effective medium of mass communication, should be viewed as a vehicle of the cultural revolution that was being ushered in by him.²⁴

Various *rasas* (moods) have been used to convey his emotions. Sometimes *bhakti rasa* (*Japuji*) is used, and then *shinghar* (*Bara Mah*) in order to highlight the emotional effect of his message.

Guru has composed his *bani* according to *ragas* (musical modes). Voice-culture was not end for the Guru—*Raga* was for him an artistic medium to be used to explore uncharted area of spiritual awareness. The Guru wanted *raga* to be used for mental, moral and spiritual upliftment of the people. Worship and *nam simran* is the only objective. Music here is a medium for the expression of spiritual feeling prevailing in the *bani*; *Sabad* is the dominating factor, and music is only there to enhance its spirit. In fact, *raga* was meant by the Guru to be an aesthetic vehicle which would carry the verbal message to the remotest recesses of mind, and release responses which usually remain untouched even by poetical approaches. Probably the *raga* system adumbrated in Guru Nanak's *bani* represents a massive attempt on the part of the Guru at owning, elevating and classifying a range of musical patterns whose immediate roots lay down in the essentially composite folk-culture of the period and not in the courtly, classical culture.

In the case of Guru Nanak's compositions such as *Vars* tunes of specific popular folk-ballads are prescribed as guiding models. The accomodation of folk-music in the Sikh scripture is in line with the sympathetic attitude of the Guru towards many aspects of folk-culture, the emotions, desires and hopes of the commonality. This may also raise the probability of the Guru having adopted some *ragas* current among the people, though not popular with the classicists, and for all that we know, *Tukhari* and *Majh* may be two such examples.²⁵

Guru Nanak possessed a fair knowledge of Indian musical

notation (*Bharti Sangeet Parampara*). Besides, a preacher, he was a *ragi* also. He took pride in being a *dhadi* (musician).

Me, the bard out of work, the Lord has applied to His service.
In the very beginning he gave me the order to sing His praise night
and day.²⁶

In his *Janamsakhis* (life stories) he is depicted communicating the divine message (*dhur ki bani*) by singing the holy 'word' to the accompaniment by Mardana, a Muslim musician.²⁷

Guru Nanak selected his *ragas* according to the requirement of his theme, feeling and sentiments. In his *bani* Guru Nanak has used suitable *ragas* for the exposition of different emotions. There is a close relationship between the content of the hymn and the *rasa* of the *raga* used for that hymn. The Guru has composed his *bani* in 19 *ragas* i.e. *Sri Rag*, *Rag Majh*, *Rag Gauri*, *Rag Asa*, *Rag Gujari*, *Bihagra Rag Vadhans*, *Rag Sorath*, *Rag Dhanasari*, *Rag Tilang*, *Rag Suhi*, *Rag Bilawal*, *Rag Ramkali*, *Rag Maru*, *Rag Tukhari*, *Rag Bhairo*, *Rag Basant*, *Rag Sarang*, *Rag Malar*, *Rag Prabhati*, etc. Some of these *ragas* i.e. *Sri Rag*, *Gauri Ramkali* and *Bhairo*, are particularly used for the expression of the sobriety, grief, mental contentment whereas *Bilawal*, *Suhi*, *Bihagra*, *Basant* and *Malar ragas* are used for the expression of feelings of joy and happiness.

Guru Nanak has made some original contribution to the Indian Music. For example *Rag Tukhari*, *Majh*, *Gauri (Deepki)* and *Asa* are used for the first time by Guru Nanak. We do not find any reference to these *ragas* in Indian Music before Guru Nanak. On the whole the composition of the *bani* in composite *ragas* is a great contribution of Guru Nanak in *bhakti* movement for cultural integration.

The *bani* sung devotionally in prescribed *ragas* preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music (i.e. *rabab*, *Siranda*, *Sitar*, *Dilruba*, *Harmonium*, *Mirdang*, *Pakhawaj* and *Tabla* etc.) is called

Kirtan. Under the guidance of Guru Nanak *Kirtan* became a means of strengthening the bonds that brought members of the rising Sikh community closer to one another. According to the Sikh Scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, *Kirtan* (of the authorised *bani*) sung devotionally in prescribed *ragas*, preferably to the accompaniment of instrumental music, cleans the mind of all sensual impurities,²⁸ liberates man from the yoke of time and death²⁹ and leads him to emancipation. It is considered as an effective agency for stopping the cycle of rebirths.³⁰ Often it is credited with the power of liquidating disease, sorrow and suffering³¹ and bringing about perfect peace of mind and bliss.³²

The *bani* of Guru Nanak, sung in prescribed *ragas* popularly known as *Kirtan* deeply touches the heart.³³ The use of *ragas* has imparted a spirit of mass appeal to the teachings of Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak's Religious Symbolism ³⁴

Among the products of Bhakti Movement Sikhism is the only attempt that was successfully institutionalised. Guru Nanak presented an entirely new mode of religious symbolism. In the *bani* of Guru Nanak, symbolism concentrates on the direct relation between the individual and transcendent reality. A great deal of cosmological baggage of Puranic theology is dropped as superstition. The sacrament of the Vedic religion is replaced with the anti-ritualist interpretation of the sacraments as a commemoration of God.

We can trace the break with traditional metaphysical traditions in the teachings of Guru Nanak . The Guru placed the whole religious problem in the new light. He tried to ground religion in the structure of the human situation itself.

The world-view that has emerged from the teachings of Guru Nanak clearly indicates that infinitely single world has replaced the duplex structure. The immediate result of his grounding religion in the structure of ethical life rather than in metaphysics, claiming cognitive adequacy, is that there is simply no room for a hierarchic dualistic

religious symbol-system of the classical type³⁵. In Guru Nanak *bani* deities of the Hindu pantheon are mentioned, but they are not to be assumed to be real nor are they object of worship. They are mentioned only symbolically and metaphorically. In this respect Guru Nanak's religion is typical of modern religious tradition as well as an analysis of religious symbolism.

Religious symbolism in Guru Nanak *bani* is concerned imaging the ultimate conditions of existence, whether external or internal. Therefore, we must examine the theology of Guru Nanak at each stage, the kind of religious system involved in it and the kind of religious action it stimulates.

The *bani* of Guru Nanak, being essentially a poetry of spiritual experience, the expression in it usually takes the form of symbols, figures and images. Some of these are from Indian spiritual traditions,³⁶ others though only a few come from the popularly current Muslim vocabulary³⁷. Sometimes esoteric terms³⁸ are used just as epithets of God. The usage of Hindu-Muslim symbols may represent the broad, universal outlook of the Guru to whom none is alien but all mankind are brothers and friends.

Symbols in the *bani* of Guru Nanak range over a wide area of human activity and natural forces,³⁹ overlaid with mystical and theological overtones⁴⁰

No one can escape the essential characteristics of religious symbolism of Guru Nanak and its capacity to express simultaneously several meanings, the unity between which is not evident on the plane of immediate experience. The world patterning symbols (the male-female pairing in the primeval sacred marriage) and the personalized objects of nature (*Barah Mah* and *Oankar*) are used as parts of reality and attempt is made to lend it coherence by interrelating the parts and the whole (*Asa di var*).

In the theology of Guru Nanak the world is a creation of the God or of Supernatural Being (*Asa di Var*). Here, to discover a world pattern amounts to revealing a meaning of the Divine Will. It is for this reason that symbols used by Guru Nanak imply an ontology, an expression of judgement both on the world and on human existence⁴¹. The *bani* of Guru Nanak reveals a correspondence of a mystical order between the various levels of cosmic reality and certain modalities of human existence (*Asa di var and Var Majh*). It is the result of a certain mode of viewing the world (*Asa di Var*). The religious symbols in the *bani* of Guru Nanak allows man to discover a certain unity of world and at the same time to become more aware of his own destiny as an integral part of the world (*Japuji*). The various cosmic levels are mutually related and in a sense 'bound together' by a 'Divine Order' (*Hukam*).

An important function of religious symbolism of Guru Nanak is its capacity to express certain patterns of Ultimate Reality that can be comprehended only in an integrated manner. One example will suffice, the symbolism of the five *khands* (stages of spiritual progress) as given in *Japuji*⁴² presents the mode of existence from one world to another. A transfer from temporal to the spiritual existence is a significant factor in the functional role of symbols. One can easily understand the significance of all these 'images' because of the possibility of a passage exists. One can pass through the series of *Khands* in so far as one proves capable of detaching oneself from immediate reality while performing one's duties in life in the spirit of a *Gurmukh*. This factor of Guru Nanak's teachings plays a significant role in the development of *Gurmat Vichardhara* (Sikh Philosophy).

The religious symbols in the *bani* of Guru Nanak have the capacity to express that oppositions and antagonism can be integrated into unity (*Siddh gosht*).

The usage of Puranic mythology as a mode of symbolization not

only finds a justification but also reveals itself as an integral part of 'All reality' or 'Sacralty'.

Finally, we must stress the existential values of religious symbolism of Guru Nanak. In the *bani* of Guru Nanak a symbol always points to a reality or a situation concerning human existence. Here, symbols establish contact with the deep sources of life, they express the 'spiritual' as 'life experience' and not as concepts⁴³. That is why symbols and imagery used by Guru Nanak have a kind of *numinous aura*; they reveal that the modalities of the spirit are at the same time manifestations of life and consequently, they directly concern human existence and have a deep universal appeal. The fundamental ingredients of Guru Nanak's religious symbolism in a comprehensive analysis is a compelling study of the nature as universally recognised symbols. It is a well known fact that universally recognised signs and symbols as representation of human thought- spans all ages and continents.⁴⁴ Besides, symbolism of Guru Nanak not only reveals a pattern of reality or a dimension of existence but also gives a meaning to human existence. This is why symbols, concerning Ultimate Reality, also offer existential revelation to a person who deciphers their meaning (*Mul Mantra*).

Moreover, religious symbols in the *bani* of Guru Nanak translates a human situation in cosmological terms, it reveals the unity between human existence and structure of the cosmos. In the theology of Guru Nanak man does not feel himself isolated from the cosmos, he opens himself to the objective world and succeeds in emerging from his personal situation to reach a comprehension of the universe.

The most important function of religious symbolism of Guru Nanak is that, through it the individual experience is 'awoken' and transmuted into a spiritual act. This is Guru Nanak's way of propagating a Universal morality that cut across the bonds of creeds and bind all men of goodwill in the practice of the gospel of integration.

It is evidently clear from the above study, that the usage of folk

language, local dialects and forceful devices of communication with emotional orientation (*Rasas* and *Ragas*) and shades of Universal religious symbolism not only possess the inbuilt gradients of instant appeal to human sensitivity and appears to play a significant role in the mechanism of the thought process of the readers but also invokes the inherent spirit of the global vision and Universal outlook of Guru Nanak's message of human salvation. Herein, lies the scope and area of Guru Nanak's contribution to the development of Punjabi language as medium of communication.

Notes and References

1. The greatest constituent in the language of Guru Nanak *bani*, Panjabi was of course the spoken language of the people of the Punjab (areas lying north of the river Ghaggar stretching north and west upto the river Indus), had all along a folk literature of its own in the various dialects spoken over its vast extent. Of all the dialects of Punjab, the most remarkable form had come from the areas lying west of the river Ravi, which while culturally not following a uniform pattern, had generally been tinged by Muslim tradition and by Persian and Arabic though basically it remained firmly Indian. Therefore, the Panjabi dialects of the hymns of Guru Nanak may indicate the cultural influences that had been built up there. See Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation), Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, Vol.I, Introduction, p. Xli.
2. Basically, Guru Nanak's language was Lehandi. But during his itineraries (*udasis*) he learnt various local dialects which had their affects on his compositions.
3. At times Sanskrit is predominant and at other place, Apabhramsh. Example of the first category can be cited in his *Sahaskriti Salok* (*Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1353).
4. Gurubachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation), Introduction, p. Xli.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 903.
7. This may not be taken as absolute rule. This is not a practice observed without exception but its occurrence may be seen generally and usually,

See Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation), Vol. I, p. Xliii.

8. *Rag Vadahans*, Mahala I, *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 578-581.
9. *Rag Tukhari*, Mahala I, *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 74-75.
10. *Siddh Gosht* is the transcript of a discussion with Yogis, who would be drawn from several language areas and who normally carry on their discussion and dissemination in varieties of Hindi (*Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 938-46). *Siddh Gosht* of Guru Nanak is primarily concerned with repudiation of the Tantra cult as practised by the Jogis in the Punjab.
11. Gurubachan Singh Talib, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (In English Translation). Introduction, p. Xliii.
12. *Ibid.*, p. Xliv.
13. *Ibid.*
14. The *bani* being poetry, its grammatical structure need not conform to analytical prose. Especially because of the expression being in most cases highly compact, arising from the flow of spiritual inspiration. In the study of *bani*, structure is left to take care of itself. However, the vowel marks (*vibhaktas*) are reliable guide to interpretation of this religious text.
15. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 417-418.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 469-489.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 557-94.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 1107-1117.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 1353.
20. *Ibid.*, 722-723.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 938-946.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 58 see also pp. 60, 153, 1169 and 1410.
23. Guru Nanak placed himself on a level with the low caste disinherited fold denied of the path of liberation (*bhakti*). Out of compassion for them he raised his voice:
ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ॥
ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ॥
(The lowest among the low castes; lower than the lowliest-Nanak is with them.
He envies not those , with worldly greatness.
Lord, Thy Glance of grace falls on the land where the humble are cherished) -*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 15.

At another place, he exalts the low caste thus:

ਜਾਤਿ ਕੁਲੀਨੁ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜੇ ਹੋਇ॥
ਤਾ ਕਾ ਕਹਣਾ ਕਹਹੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ॥
ਵਿਚਿ ਸਨਾਤੀ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਹੋਇ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਛੀਆ ਪਹਿਰੈ ਸੋਇ॥

(Should anyone out of the higher castes serve the Lord,
Beyond expression is his merit.

One out of the lower castes that serves God.

Saith Nanak, may wear shoes made from my skin).

Ibid., p. 1256.

24. Pritam Singh, 'Keertana and the Sikhs' in *Journal of Sikh Studies*, Vol.III, No.2, August 1976, p. 184.
25. *Ibid.*
26. ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ॥
ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 150.

27. The *Janamsakhis* are the traditional biographies of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539), founder of Sikhism, written during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries in Gurmukhi script. The *Janamsakhis* are different both in form and content. There are four major traditions of *Janamsakhis* i.e. *Puratan Janamsakhi*, *Meharban Janamsakhi* (also called *Pothi Sach Khand*), *Bala Janam Sakhi* (various versions) and *Bhai Mani Singh Janamsakhi* (also called *Gyan Ratnavali*). Besides, *Colebrooke Janamsakhi* (*Valaitvali Janamsakhi*, India Office Library, London) and *B-40 Janamsakhi* (India Office Library, London) are also various well known versions of *Janamsakhis*. For detailed study of the *Janamsakhi* Literature See Kirpal Singh, *Janamsakhi Parampara*, Published by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1969.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 289, 979, 1174.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 867.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 297, 624 and 747.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 213 and 1085.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 178, 926 and 962 also p.818.
33. See Pritam Singh, *op. cit.*
34. My interpretation of the symbolism in Guru Nanak *bani* is a theoretical abstraction and it is heavily based on the works of Mircea Eliade for its main features ; see *Myth and Reality* (Tr. by R. Trask), New York, 1963;

The Sacred and Profane: The Nature of Religion (Tr.R.Trask), and *Myths, Rites, Symbols* (ed. Wendel C. Beane and William G. Doty), Harper Colophon Books, U.S.A., 1976, Vol.II).

35. In Guru Nanak *bani* deities out of Hindu pantheon and the *Puranas* and the epics are mentioned, but they are not to be assumed literally.
36. In the terminology to be found in the *bani* of Guru Nanak a large number of attributive names of the *Sagun bhakti* are found. These terms represent God in His attributed aspect as the Creator and Preserver and object of devotion.
37. Such as *Allah* (God), *Kadir* (mighty), *Rehman* (merciful), *Karim* (gracious) etc. came from the popularly current Muslim vocabulary. *Sahib* (Lord/Master) and *Khasam* (Husband/Master) came from the Arabic current at that time. Theological and Sufistic terms drawn from Islam are also there, but they are used generally in context where audience especially addressed may be conceived to be Muslim.
38. Terms like *Wadda* (great), *Nam*, *Sabda* are also used. There are deeply significant esoteric symbols pertaining to higher spiritual experience. These terms are drawn mainly from the realm of yogic cults, but in Guru Nanak *bani* their meaning is transmuted to symbolize the joy and ecstasy consequent upon the accomplishment of the practice of *Sehaj*.
39. Images from the social relationship, from the animal world, and the world of nature and vegetation, of agriculture, commerce and from folk-story and legend are constantly employed. *Kant/Khasam* (husband/lord) is God, the Divine spouse. The imagery of the married womens' (*Suhagan*) relationship is drawn in which parents' home is this life while hereafter is the husband's (Lord's) house, the soul here is living in separation from God and is yearning for union (*Barah mah.*).

For those involved in voluptuous joys, Guru Nanak expresses his compassion over man's suffering because he is ignorant of the consequences of his own wild impulses and passions. For this expression Guru Nanak has used two striking figures i.e. of the black buck and the humming bee (*Asa Chhant, Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 439-40). Elsewhere, the lust gripped elephant is the figure employed, ramping through the forest of desire.

Figures from bio-sciences have also been used as simile and metaphors. The lotus figure occurs in the *Siddh Gosht* to symbolize purity amidst: i.e. impurities of the world, as the lotus that is not touched by water in which

it grows. In this context another figure that occurs is that of the duck, whose pinions remain unaffected by water it swims. The figures of tree, flower and fruit have been used to express the status and qualities of the *Guru* and his benediction (*Var Majh*, 1,20,*Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 137,141; *Var Sarang*, 20, *Ibid.*, p. 1245).

40. The mystical overtone in the symbolization of *Guru Nanak bani* is expressed through the imagery of the Indian romantic poetry *Biraha*. The context is the loving devotion (*Bhakti*) of the self, separated from the object of love, that is, the Divine Being by the wheel of transmigration. There is a painful feeling and the pangs of deep anguish over separation and these emotions are expressed through a variety of literary symbols employed in the tradition of *biraha rasa*.

A great deal of *Guru Nanak bani* pertaining to *bhakti* and mystic experience is expressive of anguish of separation and joy of union through devotion (*bhakti*) and *Grace (nadar/mehar)* of God. The most significant of such composition in *Guru Nanak bani* is *Bara Mah* (Song of the Months) in the *Rag* (Musical measure) *Tukhari*.

The type of *bhakti* expressed in *Guru Nanak bani* is that of *Nirgun bhakti* i.e. devotion to the formless and unattributed Ultimate Reality. To attune the mind in love to the *Nirgun Bhakti* involves deep concentration. It cannot in any way be grasped by the help of the senses. 'To express this passion of *bhakti*, the imagery of romantic poetry is involved. The devotee is conceived of as the yearning female; the wife pining away in sorrow for her beloved husband gone to distant lands in ages when separation meant no news or communication for months or years, and parting once might means parting for ever in a hopeless vigil to be kept. The love lorn bride (*suhagan*) seeking companionship with her sister-friends (*sakhi/saheli*) to while away the days of sorrow etc., such modes are frequently expressed. Here the sense of *bhakti* lies in the quest for the union with the Divine, spurred on by love. Such poignant feelings with the beautiful hues of romance scattered over the expression of *bhakti* are found in the *Bara Mah* of *Guru Nanak*.

While in form the symbolism in *Bara Mah* is romantic, in essence it aims at so guiding the self perpetually to live in the 'Divine Presence', and to give total surrender of oneself to God. 'A synthesized vision of life such as suggested here, is the essence of the concept of mysticism and not any withdrawal from the world or search after some ascetic creeds'.

Guru Nanak in a figure drawn from the household choice of making curd from milk, expresses the secret of true devotion and the pure heart into which Divine Grace may be hoped to enter; not in the heart fouled by sin, but one that by devotion is purified:

ਭਾਂਡਾ ਧੋਇ ਬੈਸਿ ਸੁਪੁ ਦੇਵਹੁ ਤਉ ਦੂਧੈ ਕਉ ਜਾਵਹੁ॥
 ਦੂਧੁ ਕਰਮ ਫੁਨਿ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਮਾਇਣੁ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਜਮਾਵਹੁ॥
 ਜਪਹੁ ਤ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮ॥
 ਅਵਰਿ ਨਿਰਾਫਲ ਕਾਮ॥

(Wash the pot sitting patiently; then apply to it incense.

Thereafter proceed to pour into it milk.

Our actions are milk, our attentive devotion the yeast,

With heart freed from desire put yeast in the milk, contemplate the Sole Name of God—

Unavailing are all other actions).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 728.

The expression of true *bhakti* in Guru Nanak *bani* is a great source of enlightenment in the higher spiritual secrets and mystical experience.

Doubt arising from the disbelief is condemned as illusion and mystical experience of joy and ecstasy (*Anand*) are voiced in the ever present remembrance (*nam simran*) of God.

The perpetual consciousness of the immanence of 'Divine presence' is expressed with the help of various metaphors, imageries from the phenomenal world. For example in *Sri Raga*, at the opening, the *Sabad*: *Moti ta Mandir usarei* are recounted pleasures of the world, such, as gorgeous palaces, delights of voluptuous pleasures, miraculous powers, royal grandeur. At the end of each such visionaries the resolve:

ਮੋਤੀ ਤ ਮੰਦਰ ਉਸਰਹਿ ਰਤਨੀ ਤ ਹੋਹਿ ਜੜਾਉ॥

(Lest such pleasures delude me into forgetting Thee and Thy Name enter not my mind).

Guru Granth Sahib, p.14.

In the next hymn '*koti koti miri arja* are mentioned achievements of Yoga. The harshest austerities, ascent into the firmament as bird's wings, whirling out God's laudation with everlasting motion of the wind: yet at each step the cry arises :

ਕੋਟਿ ਕੋਟੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਰਜਾ ਪਵਣੁ ਪੀਅਣੁ ਅਪਿਆਉ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 14.

In *Var Majh* (*Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 141-42) in re-expression of these

affirmations are mentioned the world's wonderous delights, terrible maladies, great evils pursuing the self, voluptuous delights yet despite all distractions :

Still must I land Thee, in unyielding joy of heart.

ਨਦੀਆ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਧੋਣਵਾ ਸੁੰਮ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਦੁਧੁ ਘੀਉ॥

ਸਗਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਸਕਰ ਹੋਵੈ ਖੁਸੀ ਕਰੇ ਨਿਤ ਜੀਉ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, pp. 141-42.

In *Asa* (*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 9) in a hymn also included in *Rahras* (the Evening Prayer) , Guru Nanak thus expresses the consciousness of the 'Divine Presence' as the very breath of the devotees' life.

ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ॥

(I live only as God's Name I utter;

Forgetfulness of it to me is death.

Hard it is to induce in oneself utterance of the holy Name.

As hunger for the holy Name arises;

In that hunger are consumed all sorrows).

Guru Granth Sahib, p.9.

The state of realization of the 'Divine Presence' has been expressed in a universal image. In this context deep mystical terms:

ਭਾਂਡਾ ਭਾਉ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਢਾਲਿ॥

ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ॥

(Make loving devotion the crucible; that mould you the *amrita* of realization.

In this holy mould mint the coin of realization).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 8.

Union with the Absolute is the Ultimate end of 'Guru Nanak *Bhakti*'. In *Guru Nanak bani* the union with the Absolute is expressed through symbols. The most commonly used symbol is that of water flowing into water . The drop into the ocean and the merging to be indistinguishable from it. In the words of Guru Arjan Dev :

ਜਿਉ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਜਲੁ ਆਇ ਖਟਾਨ॥

ਤਿਉ ਜੋਤੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਨ॥

ਮਿਟਿ ਗਏ ਗਵਨ ਪਾਏ ਬਿਸੁਮ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਦ ਕੁਰਬਾਨ॥

(As water into water mingles;

So does light merge into Divine Light.

Then is ended wandering in transmigration and rest found;
Nanak ever is a sacrifice to the Lord).

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 278.

The ultimate end of all spiritual endeavour is to transcend and abide in the Divine Presence. This state of grace is spontaneous operation of Divine Presence (*Hukam*). Such is its mystery and glory that Guru Nanak says:

ਵੇਖੈ ਵਿਗਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਬਨਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਾਰੁ॥

(Its expression is hard as steel)

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 8.

(The above note on the religious symbolization of Guru Nanak *bani* is largely based on the study of the related theme given in Gurbachan Singh Talib's *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*). In English Translation, Introduction, pp lvi-lxi).

41. In *Japuji* (*Pauri 20*, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 4) Guru Nanak affirms, all deeds done must find retribution (sow thyself the seed, consume the produce thereof). In this vision the imagery to express the stern law of retribution is borrowed from the realm of agriculture and it is adopted as a symbol for the Divine Law/Law of Justice/Law of Retribution wherein every deed, good or bad influence the future destiny of the individual self. The accumulated deeds (*Kirat Kamai* or deeds done) in accordance with the 'Divine Law' is not something arbitrary made in heaven (like that of the Day of Judgement in Muslim Religion) but in consequence of the Divine *Hukam*, the cosmic law of the universe.

Guru Nanak's vision of the universe in its functioning is centered in *Dharma* (moral law that keeps the cosmos going according to the Divine will). *Dharma* is righteousness and its essence lies in compassion. The imagery for it is 'taken from Puranic mythology (*Japuji 16*, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 4). The operation of the Divine Law and the moral lesson for the end of the evil doers has been expressed with the example of the tyrants from Puranic lore (*Var Asa 10*, *Ibid.*, pp. 224-25). Guru Nanak's vision of ontology and expression of judgement, unlike that of his contemporary *bhaktas* was not confined to Puranic legendary references, but took in its sweep the contemporary scene where tyranny must come to a deserved end too. (*Ramkali Dakhani*, *Onkar 49*, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 937, also *Gauri Ast-7*, *Ibid.*, p. 223). Guru Nanak had expressed deep anguish at the

prevailing injustice, corruption and evil in society, which he has expressed through the symbol of the dark night (*Var Asa, Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 468).

In Guru Nanak's own time Babar invaded India. Guru Nanak was a witness to Babar's inroads to Wazirabad (now in Pakistan). The four hymns of the Guru (*Asa* 39, *Guru Granth Sahib*, p.360; *Asa Ast* 11-12, *Ibid.*, p. 417; *Tilang* 5, *Ibid.*, p. 722) pertaining to this occasion, besides throbbing with pity for the sufferings of the innocent humanity and expressing deep anguish over the fall of India; state the great moral lesson on which, cosmos law, and neglect of which by men can lead only to suffering and self-destruction. In his great vision on the destiny of nations, when they forsake the path of righteousness, the Guru expresses his judgement on the degenerate state of Indian society and consequent repercussions.

42. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 7-8.
43. *Ibid.*, pp.360,417,722-23.
44. For detailed study of the Universal signs and symbols see Andrian Frutiger, *Signs And Symbols - Their Design And Meaning* (original in German, Translated into English by Andrew Bluhm), Studio Edition, Pub. Best Seller Publications Limited, London, England, 1989.

GURU NANAK'S RESPONSE TO WAR AND VIOLENCE

Balwant Singh Dhillon

The Sikhs, the world over carry a very high reputation as industrious, honest and brave people. Undoubtedly, they have a long and glorious tradition of valour and bravery to their credit. Likewise, they have shown a remarkable spirit of tolerance and forbearance, and have faced death without any remorse or malice towards their tormentors. They have always been in the vanguard of armed struggle against the repressive state machinery. Similarly in pre-and post-independence era, whenever they have felt they are being ill-treated or deprived of their just rights, they have not only launched but also successfully conducted non-violent or *Satyagraha* type agitations against the state. Evidently, they have demonstrated their indomitable spirit of defiance, armed as well as non-violent.

Guru Nanak's response to his contemporary political milieu in general, and to violence in particular, was very largely determined by the nature of his mystic experience. Many modern scholars of Sikhism who failed to appreciate this, have been baffled as to how a peace-loving community committed to ideals of brotherhood, equality and well-being of all, could resort to the policy of armed confrontation. They believe that the idea of armed confrontation or use of force is quite alien to the basic spirit of Sikhism. Consequently, they lament that successors of Guru Nanak, especially those who resorted to armed confrontation and promoted militarisation of the Sikh Panth, allegedly deviated from the original lofty mission.

Fredric Pincott is foremost among the scholars who subscribe to the above view. He believes that the activity of Guru Hargobind was a reversal of "the best intentions of the founder of Sikhism."¹ He has further remarked that "the entire reversal of the project" was gradual, and was as much due to political cause as to a steady departure from the teachings of Guru Nanak.² To be precise about his view regarding the development of Sikhism, he states, "no contrast indeed will be greater than that between the inoffensive and gentle-minded Guru Nanak and the war-like and ambitious Gurus of later times."³ It is significant to note that to Fredric Pincott, "intention of Guru Nanak was to bring reconciliation between Hinduism and Islam, but his pious object was defeated by political cause, and by the war-like nature of the people of Punjab."⁴ J.D. Cunningham had remarked earlier that, "the temper and the circumstances of Guru Hargobind prompted him to bring new innovations in Sikhism."⁵ Later on many a scholars like J.N. Sarkar accused Guru Hargobind that "he had so completely sunk the character of religious reformer in that of a conquering general, that he had no scruple in enlisting large bands of Afghan mercenaries."⁶ Arnold Toynbee, a renowned historian has also been constrained to note that Sikhism fell from, "religious heights into political trough, because (Guru) Hargobind and (Guru) Gobind Singh.... succumbed to the temptation to use force."⁷ Recently W.H. McLeod has added another dimension by suggesting that, "the arming of the Sikh Panth would not have been the result of any decision of Guru Hargobind."⁸ He thinks that "the growth of militancy within the Panth must be traced primarily to the impact of Jat cultural pattern and the economic problems which prompted a military response."⁹ Obviously, the variety of views cited above, suggests a state of dichotomy between the faith of Guru Nanak and the policy and activities pursued by some of his successors. Secondly, they yield the impression that Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh were enticed by some war-like elements in their following, to depart from the path of Guru Nanak and to adopt the policy to militarise the Sikh Panth, which

also smacks of political intentions. The inter-locking of spiritual and temporal aspects in Sikhism is inevitably associated with the policy of armed struggle with accompanying political overtones. While deciding its emergence, nature and motives, therefore, it will have to be examined whether the religion of Guru Nanak really intended to insulate religion from politics, or it contains any political idea which ultimately provided ideological legitimacy to the policy of armed confrontation. Therefore, it is pertinent to inquire into whether the nature of Guru Nanak's religious experience permits any spirit of defiance and if it does, then what is the nature of his protest.

In studying the social behaviour, almost all the sociologists are unanimous in their view that the religious experience of any kind works as a major catalyst in determining the attitude of its followers. Though, in the typologies of religious leadership various types of religious authority have been enumerated, but to explore the social dimension of religious experience, the sociologists have invariably followed Max Weber to denote it as ascetic, mystical and prophetic.¹⁰ In the words of Max Weber, "the genuine prophet preaches, creates or demands new obligations."¹¹ Moreover, prophetic experience has been found radically different from both the ascetic and the mystical experience, because it neither involves withdrawal from the world and society, nor does it accept the world as it is.¹² Joachim Wach enables us to understand this contrast. when he says, "owing to his contact with the deepest sources of life the prophet reacts rigorously against all disturbances of perversion of the civil or moral order, which is meant to reflect the divine will." He feels, "the consciousness of being the organ, instrument or mouth-piece of the divine will is characteristic of the self-interpretation of the prophet."¹³ Actually sociologists are unanimous in their view that prophetic experience involves a sense that one is serving as a divine agent to challenge the evil social order in the name of ultimate standards.¹⁴ It always emphasizes criticism and revision of the social order, and involves a call for struggle, not only to eradicate it but also to establish

it on just and equitable terms. Comprehending the true spirit and impact of the prophetic experience, Dr Muhammad Iqbal has aptly remarked that the advent of prophet is creative, and that it tends to control the forces of history and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals.¹⁵ He has very emphatically stated that "the desire to see his religious experience transformed into a living world force, is always supreme in the prophet."¹⁶ Evidently, the nature of religious experience holds key to the prophet's response to the social order. But the scholars writing on Guru Nanak's response to politics, so far, have completely overlooked these dimensions of his religious experience. Consequently, they have failed to properly judge and appreciate the impact of Guru Nanak's religious experience on the social behaviour of his followers.

Analyses of Guru Nanak's *bani* and various *Janamsakhi* traditions make it abundantly clear that Guru Nanak intensely felt himself to be an intermediary or instrument of God to proclaim the Divine Will. Though he never claimed to be an incarnation of God, he certainly acted as mouth-piece of God, through whom the Divine Will came to be manifested in the word of God, i.e., *Shabad*.¹⁷ Like a true and genuine prophet, neither did he preach renunciation of the society or the world, nor did he accept the society or the world as it was.¹⁸ He unequivocally and fearlessly, criticized the evil order, whether it was social, religious or political.¹⁹ To bring about radical change in the existing social order he propounded new ideals, and to realize them he also established the new institutions of *guruship*, *sangat*, *langar* and *dharamsala*. Through these ideals and institutions he applied pragmatic test to his religious experience which in return was to transform the whole gamut of human relationship to establish a fresh world order. Evidently we can term Guru Nanak's religious experience as a prophetic one, which, not only challenged the contemporary social order, but also demanded new obligations to wage a relentless struggle against it, and to establish a fresh world of ideals ultimately leading to a fresh world order in the shape of the Sikh Panth. Throughout history, Guru Nanak's religious

experience not only continued to deepen the historical awareness of his followers, but it also provided to them guidance and motivation to withstand evil and to participate in the struggle to remove it as a divine obligation.

Sometimes, it has also been suggested that Guru Nanak's message is primarily concerned with spiritualism with a predominantly moral theological content.²⁰ Guru Nanak has also been termed chiefly as a pacifist, whose major thrust was conciliation among various faiths.²¹ Certainly, he preached love, peace, compassion and harmony with all creatures. But these scholars have failed to appreciate the prophetic dimension of his religion. Resistance to evil and protest against evil order, be it social, religious or political, have remained completely overlooked. As explained earlier, we can term Guru Nanak's religious experience as a prophetic one, the chief characteristics of which are criticism of the evil social order and a call for struggle in the name of God to remove it in order to establish a just world order.

Inevitably, a 'church' propagating resistance to evil social order as a divine obligation in its endeavour for justice, may come in conflict or clash with the 'state' perpetuating the order to its own advantage. The ensuing conflict can further lead to escalation of war and violence. We have observed how some scholars were perplexed over the supposed contrast between 'the gentle-minded and inoffensive disposition of Guru Nanak' and 'the war-like attitude of the later Gurus'. Their supposition betrays ignorance, because their comprehension of Guru Nanak as a pacifist has been overshadowing their judgement, and resultantly, they have not bothered to inquire into Guru Nanak's response to war and violence. His nature of protest against the evil social order, and his attitude towards the use of force, have not been properly judged in the context of his over-all world-view.

There are numerous verses of Guru Nanak which reflect his nature of protest against the corrupt and inefficient political set-up.²² He

has enjoined upon the ruling class not to inflict atrocities on the subjects. Instead he wants them to be considerate and just to mitigate the sufferings of the people.²³ Setting aside other norms for succession, he has propounded that merit and competence alone should determine the right to the throne.²⁴ Disapproving of moral laxity, and setting high standards of morality, he desired that a king should not only be an embodiment of divine virtues, but he should also dispense justice without any impunity.²⁵ He was of the firm view that the ultimate source of authority is God, and that He alone is the distributor of temporal power and riches.²⁶ He believed that man's first and foremost allegiance is to God and not to worldly thrones or persons in authority.²⁷ Obviously, Guru Nanak's allegiance to the State was not unqualified or without any strings. In fact, it is on just conduct only, that a ruler can claim allegiance from followers of Guru Nanak. Otherwise, if he did not perform his duty justly, and for the good of the people, he was liable to lose the mandate to rule, and enlightened or divinely inspired persons have the right to challenge his authority.

Guru Nanak was a strong proponent of peaceful co-existence, and abhorred the use of State power to seek conversion from other faiths to swell the ranks of the religion of the ruling class.²⁸ There are certain verses of Guru Nanak which exhort man not to indulge in such propensities but to control the vices which perpetually vitiate human relationship and social environment.²⁹ He has postulated the heterogeneous character of society where, besides goodness, one also finds evil.³⁰ Consequently one feels disenchanted when he observes discomfort, anger, conflict, enmity, discord, etc., prevailing all around in society. Guru Nanak was against causing grief to anyone, far from bloodshed or slaughter of a man.³¹ In his opinion every living being created by God, is sacred.³² Naturally, he abhorred war, because it brought unnecessary death and destruction and a lot of suffering to innocent civilians. His reaction to the barbarous behaviour of the Mughal soldiers of Babur is well-known. He also reminds us of the wars in which, due

to lack of compassion, innumerable precious lives were lost.³³ Presumably, he is pointing towards the wars of succession, when he refers to warring soldiers vying to chop off heads of each other.³⁴

In India the ideal of *ahimsa*, i.e., non-injury or absence of desire to kill or harm any living being has been a prominent feature of not only Gandhian philosophy in modern times, but it has also been a cornerstone of traditional Indian ethics as well. Examples of over-zealous rulers prohibiting hunting, non-vegetarian food alongwith animal sacrifices to the deties throughout their kingdoms, are not uncommon in ancient Indian history.³⁵ The dictum of *ahimsa parmo dharma* (i.e., the highest *dharma*) not only caused a change in the food habits of the people, but it also brought qualitative change in their mental attitude. Consequently, martial qualities such as physical stamina, courage, endurance and mental tenacity disappeared.³⁶ The impact of *ahimsa* was so great on the psyche of the Indian people, that even in the face of Arab invasion a section of the Indian population deserted the Sivistan ruler, saying, "our religion is one of peace and quiet, and fighting and slaying are prohibited as also all kinds of bloodshed."³⁷ Max Muller has aptly remarked that the doctrine of *ahimsa* enabled India to live a higher spiritual life but it has contributed largely to bring about its political death as well³⁸. Too much emphasis on *ahimsa* and utterly blind faith to practise it, even in the face of foreign aggression, crippled the Indians, religiously and psychologically to formulate a reasoned response to resist the evil of war. They failed to judge that the evil of war must be weighed against the evil that may occur if tyranny and injustice continued to prevail. To submit meekly and to remain non-violent against provocations and inequities of the aggressor or oppressor, amounts to permitting those who are using violent means, to succeed in their sinister designs. Such an attitude finds no *locus standi* in the faith of Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak is very much aware of people's rights as well as obligations. He concedes that the ruler's lawful demands must be

fulfilled, because this is the only way to establish a natural relationship between the ruler and the ruled.³⁹ At the same time, he feels that people should know their own rights, and that they must not become a party to the evil social order by meeting unlawful demands of corrupt officials.⁴⁰ He desired people to be conscious of their self-respect and enjoined upon them to live an honourable life.⁴¹ He exhorted them to be courageous and fearless and to proclaim truth whenever occasion demands.⁴² He even declared death for a just cause the right of heroes.⁴³ These ideals not only awakened people to their rights, but also inspired them to take initiative or cudgel for a just cause as a moral and divine obligation. Through these injunctions Guru Nanak sanctified laying down one's life for a just cause, and also injected in his followers a spirit of defiance against the evil socio-political order. People's right to protest and defence has been equally asserted. Thus, it is quite clear that Guru Nanak does not subscribe to non-violence in all situations. In compelling circumstances to vindicate righteousness and to resist evil, use of force has been legitimised.

During Babur's invasion on Hindustan, ordinary people, especially women, suffered terribly at the hands of Mughal soldiers. Guru Nanak held the Lodhis, in no uncertain terms, responsible for the agony and sufferings of the people, because it was their duty to protect the subjects from foreign aggression. Similarly he strongly admonished Babur for the tyranny and atrocities let loose on defenceless civilians. Evidently, as a religious person, Guru Nanak has not foregone his right to criticise and comment on the contemporary political scenario. Actually by criticising Babur and other high officials for their barbarious behaviour, he has set the tone and tenor of a citizen's right to protest against tyrannical and oppressive State power.

Compared to Sikhism, Christianity has a very strong doctrinal ground to remain non-violent and practise pacifism. Jesus Christ in his famous "Sermon on the Mount" preached "resist not evil", and "who-so-

ever smite you on your right check, turn to him the other also."⁴⁴ His advice to the Zealots that "those who took the sword will perish by the sword",⁴⁵ has been the corner-stone of Christian ethics to practise non-violence. Later, however, confronted with the moral dilemma to support or not to support war, Christian theologians had to formulate a doctrine of justification for the Christians to participate in war. Consequently, the doctrine formulated by St. Augustine is still considered an essential pattern of the Catholic doctrine of war.⁴⁶ St. Augustine laid down that "Church can give its support to a war, only if the cause of one side is manifestly just and it is fought without vindictiveness." The Church thus accorded sanction to a kind of reluctant participation in a 'just and mournful war'.⁴⁷ Though many churchmen have been advocating peaceful co-existence and renunciation of distinctions between the 'just' and 'unjust' wars, and to avoid war they have also been stressing mutual trust to govern the relations between different nations, but Paul Tillich seems to be very emphatic when he says; "I think the absolute ruling out of any war is ideologically impossible, because there are situations in which the right to resist might lead first to rebellion and then to revolution and then to war". He further adds "ruling out any form of resistance would give to those who violate the principle of personality, the security of not having to be bothered any longer about what they are doing."⁴⁸ In fact, he has re-emphasized the need for distinction regarding the use of force in the just exercise of power.

Contrary to the moral dilemma faced by the Christian Church to reconcile their doctrinal stand on violence and war, the Sikh community has been more fortunate in this context, because there are so many verses of Guru Nanak on the basis of which not only his nature of protest but his doctrine of defiance or resistance can clearly be outlined. In this context, as already explained, Guru Nanak has described God to be just and righteous. He has visualised God not only to be Protector of all, Fearless, Lord of lowly, Support of the supportless, but he has also conceived Him as the Destroyer of demons and earthy tyrants.⁴⁹

It was but natural that such a conception of God inspired and motivated His worshippers to be fearless and fair, and also to cultivate a spirit like Him to fight against an evil socio-political order.

No doubt, '*Babarvani*' predominantly reflects the agony of the general public under the atrocities committed by the invading Mughal army. Unfortunately, however, its one very significant dimension, which is concerned with Guru Nanak's response to war and violence has not received adequate notice. That is his stress on the norms or war ethics of a soldier, while fighting the enemy, should war become unavoidable.

It is noteworthy that Guru Nanak recalls Babur's army as the 'marriage party of sin' which has come from Kabul to demand the hand of the bride (territorial claim) by force.⁵⁰ Evidently, in Guru Nanak's opinion, a powerful country or nation on account of its military prowess, has no right to usurp the territories or rights of other nations or countries. In its endeavour to establish its hegemony, a powerful nation should desist from waging war against a weaker nation. Obviously, use of force for imperialistic designs or policy of aggression to enslave the weaker nations, has been condemned in no uncertain terms. Guru Nanak has also termed Babur as 'angel of death', 'mighty tiger' and Mughal soldiers as 'Satans'.⁵¹ Condemnation in such strong terms was reserved for Babur and his soldiers, since they transgressed human values to the extent of crimes against humanity. The Mughal soldiers' utter disregard for the modesty of womenfolk and their atrocious behaviour towards the defenceless and innocent public, has been condemned in very strong terms. Devastation and destruction of civilian property was so large, that Guru Nanak felt that priceless country had been laid waste. The invading Mughal army indulged in massacre of the people, and the extent of subsequent turmoil was so severe that there were heaps of corpses, and no one dared attend to the injured or dispose of the dead. There was large scale looting of wealth and property belonging to civilians, and the Mughal army even carried away women as war booty.

After expressing his anguish, Guru Nanak does not hesitate to record that if a mighty person strikes his mighty foe, then one should not lament, but when a mighty lion (Babur) falls upon a defenceless herd of cattles then their master is answerable for not providing protection to them.

'Babarvani' is a testimony to Guru Nanak's strong condemnation of war and aggression. Use of force or violent means for illegitimate expansion of territories, to enslave other nations or to usurp the legitimate rights of others, has been outrightly condemned. At the same time, in case war is unavoidable, or if ultimately it breaks out, Guru Nanak was very clear that aggression must be resisted, that the State is responsible for providing protection to its people, and that the warring soldiers should not transgress the human values or indulge in brutalities causing unnecessary death and destruction to innocent and defenceless subjects.

Notes And References

1. M.A. Macauliffe (ed.), *'The Sikh Religion : A Symposium'*, p. 70.
2. Fredric Pincott, *'Dictionary of Islam'*, p. 591.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 594.
4. *Ibid.*
5. J.D. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*, p. 50.
6. J.N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III, p. 206.
7. Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, p. 113.
8. W.H. McLeod, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*, p. 12.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
10. Joachim Wach, *Sociology of Religion*, pp. 343-78.
11. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation*, p. 361.
12. J. Milton Yinger, *The Scientific Study of Religion*, p. 146.
13. Joachim Wach, *op. cit.*, pp. 354-355.
14. J. Milton Yinger, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
15. Muhammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 124.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
17. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥

Guru Grant Sahib, p. 722.

18. ਅੰਨ੍ਹ ਨ ਖਾਇਆ ਸਾਦੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥ ਬਹੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਇਆ ॥
ਬਸਤ੍ਰ ਨ ਪਹਿਰੈ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਕਹਰੈ ॥ ਮੋਨਿ ਵਿਗੁਤਾ ॥ ਕਿਉ ਜਾਗੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸੂਤਾ ॥
ਅਲੁ ਮਲੁ ਖਾਈ ਸਿਰਿ ਛਾਈ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਮੂਰਖਿ ਅੰਧੈ ਪਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ ॥
ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਕਿਛੁ ਥਾਇ ਨ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਰਹੈ ਬੇਬਾਣੀ ਮੜੀ ਮਸਾਣੀ ॥
ਅੰਧੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਪਛੁਤਾਣੀ ॥

Ibid., p. 467.

19.

- ੳ) ਜਾਤੀ ਦੈ ਕਿਆ ਹਥਿ ਸਚੁ ਪਰਖੀਐ ॥ ਮਹੁਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਥਿ ਮਰੀਐ ਚਖੀਐ ॥

Ibid., p. 142.

- ਅ) ਕਾਦੀ ਕੂੜੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਮਲੁ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਜੀਆ ਘਾਇ ॥
ਜੋਗੀ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਅੰਧੁ ॥ ਤੀਨੇ ਓਜਾੜੇ ਕਾ ਬੰਧੁ ॥

Ibid., p. 662.

- ੲ) ਕਲਿ ਕਾਤੀ ਰਾਜੇ ਕਾਸਾਈ ਧਰਮੁ ਪੰਖ ਕਰਿ ਉਡਰਿਆ ॥
ਕੂੜੁ ਅਮਾਵਸ ਸਚੁ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ ਦੀਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਹ ਚੜਿਆ ॥

Ibid., p. 145.

20. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak to Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, pp. 1-10.

21. Fredric Pincott, *op. cit.*, p. 594.

22. ਰਾਜਾ ਨਿਆਉ ਕਰੇ ਹਥਿ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਕਹੈ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਇ ॥

Guru Granth Sahib, p. 350.

23. ਰਾਜੇ ਸੀਹ ਮੁਕਦਮ ਕੁਤੇ ॥ ਜਾਇ ਜਗਾਇਨ੍ਹਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਸੁਤੇ ॥

Ibid., p. 1288.

24. ਤਖਤਿ ਬਹੈ ਤਖਤੈ ਕੀ ਲਾਇਕ ॥

Ibid., p. 1039.

25. ਰਾਜਾ ਤਖਤੁ ਟਿਕੈ ਗੁਣੀ ਭੈ ਪੰਚਾਇਣ ਰਤੁ ॥

Ibid., p. 992.

26. ਕੀੜਾ ਥਾਪਿ ਦੇਇ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ਲਸਕਰ ਕਰੇ ਸੁਆਹ ॥

Ibid., p. 144.

27. ਦਰੁ ਬੀਭਾ ਮੈ ਨੀਮ੍ਹਿ ਕੇ ਕੈ ਕਰੀ ਸਲਾਮੁ ॥

Ibid., p. 418.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 1191.

29. ਕਲਹਿ ਬੁਰੀ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ਵਾਦੇ ਖਪੀਐ ॥

Ibid., p. 142.

30. ਬਿਨੁ ਵਾਦੁ ਵਿਰੋਧਹਿ ਕੋਇ ਨਹਿ ।

Ibid., p. 1028.

31. ਦਇਆ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੀਅ ਕੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਪੁੰਨੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਕਰੇਇ ॥

Ibid., p. 468.

32. ਸਭ ਤੇਰੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਤੂੰ ਕਾਦਿਰੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪਾਕੀ ਨਾਈ ਪਾਕੁ ॥
Ibid., p. 464.
33. ਖਿਮਾ ਵਿਹੂਣੇ ਖਪਿ ਗਏ ਖੁਹਣਿ ਲਖ ਅਸੰਖ ॥
ਗਣਤ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਕਿਉ ਗਣੀ ਖਪਿ ਖਪਿ ਮੁਏ ਬਿਸੰਖ ॥
Ibid., p. 937.
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ਜਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਤੇਗ ਵਗਾਵਹਿ ਸਿਰ ਮੁੰਡੀ ਕਟਿ ਜਾਵਹਿ ॥
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DIRECTIVES OF GURU NANAK DEV

Harnam Singh Shan

According to Professor M. Mujeeb, Guru Nanak's teaching is "a remarkable summing up of social doctrines of monotheistic belief. His three directives-*Kirt Karo, Nam Japo, Vand Chhako* (Work, Worship and Share) -- are the foundation of a spiritually-oriented, dynamic social life. They constitute together the starting point of good life at anytime, anywhere."¹

The divine Teacher in Guru Nanak gave some more allied directives to the common man as well as to the working and the preserving person, to the wealthy and healthy as well as to the diseased parts of human society. He was, as a matter of fact, a great humanitarian who loved humanity as such, irrespective of religious distinctions, social barriers, geographical limits or political differences. He was such a unique lover of mankind who believed that in order to keep the human society happy and healthy, balanced and integrated, it was essential to reclaim, reform and rejuvenate even its diseased parts, its rotten and depraved constituents, through love, understanding and sympathy.

2

And the benevolent Master had a message of hope and cheer for all of them, even for the evil-oriented and most hopeless creatures on this earth.² He was rather convinced of the healing touch of the holy and the basic goodness of the common man.³ He emphatically stated that the five sins (metaphorically called 'five thieves', viz. lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride) dominate and degrade all human beings. At the

same time, he believed that they are, fortunately, endowed with sufficient power and capacity to overcome these. He, therefore, observed :

Dominions, wealth, beauty, pride of caste and youthfulness
all these five are robbers (i.e. deceivers),
(since) these have deceived the whole world (of goodness),
no one caught in their clutches,
can preserve his sense of decency.
(But) these, too, are robbed (i.e. overcome) by those
who take shelter with the True Master.⁴

Herein lies the keynote of his message of hope and high spiritedness (called *charhdi kala* in Sikh parlance) for all mankind.

Guru Nanak also believed in the power and process of redemption, but stated unequivocally that :

No one is redeemed nor attains anything,
Without the gracious glance of God.⁵

He, therefore, tried to establish a link between the bestowal of the Divine Grace and the efforts of an evil-oriented or unregenerate man to purify himself and become, thereby, acceptable at His court. Such efforts are quite possible, as, according to him, the heart of even such a human being cherishes some "redeeming qualities"⁶. Religion seeks to bring out and vitalize these qualities so as to open the door of liberation. Posing this basic problem in *Raga Ramkali* and suggesting himself its solution too, Guru Nanak said :

The Problem

No one - neither kings nor chiefs, neither rich nor poor,
nor those of exalted state remain here permanently.
No one can stay here beyond his span,
when his turn comes.

The path is hard and terrible,
 and passes through immeasurable lakes
 and impassable mountains.

I am pining and dying of grief
 owing to my own faults;

And , so, how can I enter His House,
 without any merits ?

The meritorious find union with God
 by means of their merits;

How can I be united to them with love ?⁷

The Solution

I must become meritorious like them
 by contemplating God in my heart.

The human being is full of demerits,
 yet redeeming qualities also abide therewith.

But these qualities are not manifested
 without the guidance of the True Guru
 and meditation on the holy Word.^{7a}

Reassuring the meritless, the depraved and the dismayed, Guru Nanak added therefore :

The True Guru has turned mere mortals
 into god-like saints;

And that too without a moment's delay.⁸

He even assured them of all help by the True Guru even in the times of the worst troubles and in states of utter helplessness. He, therefore, advised them to seek His Grace and help even as their last resort :

When the sky is overcast
 and the tempest is at its height
 with the sea lashed into millions of waves,
 Call on the True Guru at that moment

and be free thus from
fear of the sinking of your boat.⁹

Moreover, he was such a great apostle of peace, reconciliation and unification that he not only enthused the spirit of oneness of human fellowship but also categorically held that :

He alone is the True Master
Who unites all (with the Lord and with one another).¹⁰

3

Besides, he was an amazing nation-builder who had a word of advice, a lesson of life for every one moving in any walk of life and belonging to any creed or calling, country or community, sex or status. This was so, because Guru Nanak knew very well that it took all sorts of people to make a nation. Moreover, he was neither a recluse nor a selfish worldling, thinking and working merely for his personal benefit; or meditating and praying only for his own salvation. "He wanted common man to lead a real spiritual life and combines themselves in a social pattern which will give rise to toleration for the views of others and a general desire to work for the welfare of the whole mankind."¹¹

He, therefore, advised the farmer, the bread-producer of the entire society, to :

Let good deeds be your soil
and the Guru's Word the seed;
irrigate it daily with the water of truth.
Turn yourself into a cultivator
and let the crop of faith germinate;
enabling you to know, thereby,
the difference between the state of heaven and hell.¹²

Exhorting him further, he said at another place :

Let the mind be the ploughman,

good deeds the ploughing;
 honest striving the water and your body the field.
 Let God's Name be the seed,
 contentment the leveller and humility the garb.
 Let your actions be those of love and amity,
 The seed will then sprout,
 the crop will grow,
 and you will see your home blessed with prosperity.¹³

Guru Nanak taught similar lessons to all human beings, men and women, rulers and the ruled, ascetics and house-holders, cultivators and traders, masters and servants, seekers and preceptors, teachers and students, leaders and masses, workers and shop-keepers, writers and travellers; and all those who go into the making of our social structure in their respective fields of activity.

He asked, for instance, the trader or merchant to "carry on his trade in order to gain his objective (i.e. profit), lest he should repent afterwards" :¹⁴

He also told the traveller to "carry with him provision of merits for travelling expenses and do not leave today's task for tomorrow".¹⁵

He, similarly, advised the writer :

Burn worldly attachment and pound it into ink;
 Turn your chaste intelligence into the paper.
 Make devotion your pen and your mind the scribe.
 Then write what the Guru has taught,
 'Write about God's Name and His praise;
 Write also that there is no limit of His praise
 and that there is no end to His greatness.¹⁶

While he admonished the ritualist Brahman and asked him :

Why are you wasting your life
 By watering the saline soil (i.e. fruitless deeds) ?¹⁷

He warned the haughty Mullah, telling him:

All are subject to death
which is inevitable;
Why not abide then
in the fear of God, the Creator. ¹⁸

While he cautioned the heedless man :

You have come into the world to earn profit;
But you remain engrossed to useless tasks,
While the night (i.e. the span of your life)
is heading to its end. ¹⁹

He asked the ignorant woman, that :

What joy can there be
For the one without virtue ?²⁰

4

In order to cultivate such virtues and gain real joy, Guru Nanak exhorted all to work hard and do their best in their respective fields of duty and responsibility; because :

In the whole creation
that I see around me,
Nothing worthwhile can be obtained
without effort and exertion. ²¹

He, therefore, disapproved of the idlers, parasites and charitymongers. He did not spare even the enemies and exploiters of the people; and fearlessly called them 'profligate dogs', 'blood-suckers', 'butchers of the world', 'regents of death'. and the like, as under :

1. These dogs (i.e. the profligate Lodhi rulers)
have despoiled the jewels (i.e., the people and
resources of India) and wasted them. ²²

- None shall remember and cherish them
in their death.
2. The rulers have lost their heads
In the pursuit of sensuous pleasures.²²
 3. They who devour human beings,
offer *namaz*, the Muslim prayer!
They who wield the butcher's knife,
wear the sacred thread round their necks!²³
 4. With Brahmnical paste-marks on their foreheads
and their loin-cloths with stuck-up ends,
They are actually the butchers of the world,
holding knives in their hands.²⁴
 5. ...Have sent Babar, the Mughal,
As the regent of death.²⁵

Asking them to stop the victimisation of the innocent and exploitation of the poor; and exposing, at the same time, their cunningness, he questioned their bonafides and argued :

If the garment be considered polluted
and made impure by a stain of blood;
How can the minds of those be deemed pure
who suck the blood of human beings?²⁶

Guru Nanak, similarly, denounced the ways and mechanization of the moneyed class. Cautioning the capitalists of all lands and times, he advised them, as below, to see and think before exploiting the poor further and amassing all the more wealth by hook or crock :

If the departed one has carried
some wealth with him;
You may also engage in amassing the same.
But accumulate it only after seeing,
understanding and thoughtfully determining this glaring fact.²⁷

Warning them further, he stated :

Multitudes have been strayed and humiliated
because of this wealth,
Which can never be amassed without evil-doings
and which never accompanies any one in death.²⁸

5

In a similar bold and effective way, Guru Nanak also instructed the self-oriented materialists of all denominations. Equating their outer form and inner urge with a huge but ungrateful elephant, and comparing them with that of a tiny but grateful sparrow-like God-oriented soul, the Guru concluded :

Such a one alone is dear to God
and attains His Grace;
Who utters His Name and adores Him.²⁹

Expressing his amazement at the ungrateful attitude of selfish wayward man and trying to arouse his good sense, the Guru remarked:

He claims to own everything,
But does not own the all-pervading God,
(Who alone has given him all that but)
Whom he considers alien!³⁰

Hence, cautioning him and his fellow-beings, he advised them to --

Beware ! lest
(engrossed in worldly pleasures and splendours)
You should forget the Beneficent God
and His Name is effaced from your mind !³¹

Admonishing, at the same time, the unremembering and ungrateful creatures, Guru Nanak painfully observed :

God has bound our life-breath through water and air

and has given us mighty lamps, the moon and the sun.

He has also blessed us with the earth to live and
die upon;

yet we have forgotten all His boons and bounties.³²

At another place, expressing his surprise at such an attitude, he
exclaimed :

Why should we cast Him out of our minds,

Who is the Lord of our life and soul ?

And all that we eat and wear

is impure without cherishing Him.³³

6

Similarly, he never missed an opportunity to expose and lash out at the
hypocrites. He, rather, exposed their cant and warned them in all sin-
cerity and boldness. Addressing the so-called learned and the religious-
minded, the Master said:

1. Do not utter falsehood, Pandit!
state, what is true.³⁴

2. Discard hypocrisy,
and take to God's Name;
For, it is by devotion to the Name alone
that you will be able to swim through safely,³⁵
(that is, get liberation).

As a matter of fact, he was shocked to see them degraded and
deteriorated to ~~such~~ an extent that while condemning the cant in religion
and commenting on their hypocritical ways, false professions and
affected piety, he observed :

There is a famine of truth, falsehood prevails
and the darkness of the Age
has made goblins of men.

The whole seed of true religion

has exhausted its merit with the departure of those
who had sown it.

How can the one-now broken into half, sprout ?...

The learned dance, play on instruments
and deck themselves as beauties
(for their roles in theatrical performances).

They shout aloud and sing the war-like
deeds of the past heroes.

The foolish scholars, for the love of amassing wealth,
revel in mental tricks and quibbles.

The religious-minded perform religious acts
but lose their merit by seeking the way
to their own salvation as their reward.

Those who call themselves celebrates,
knowing not the right way of celebacy,
discard their hearths and homes.

All of them consider themselves perfect
and none regards himself as anything less.

But when one is weighed
against the weights of merit (i.e. true religion),

Then alone one knows
how much one really weighs.

(That is, their lives lack real virtues,
their deeds are sham and their professions false.)³⁶.

While ridiculing, thus, the cant in religion and condemning it out-right, Guru Nanak stated very aptly and ironically too :

He who sings songs of devotion
without understanding their illuminating import;

The starving Mullah, who converts his house
into a mosque to satisfy his hunger;

He, who being incapable of earning a living,
gets his ears pierced

(so that he could beg by passing for a Yogi);
 He, who becomes a *faqir* (mendicant)
 and loses thereby his caste-respect;
 He, who claims to be a *guru* or *pir* (i.e. preceptor),
 but goes around begging;
 Never ever touch the feet of such a person.³⁷

Concluding this, the Guru claimed that --

They alone have recognised the right way
 who eat from what they earn by their own toil.
 and give away something in charity
 (for those in need).³⁸

Guru Nanak did not spare, thus, even the scholarly, the educated and the learned folk. Placing the righteous conduct and good character above intellectual brilliance and academic attainments, he went to the extent of saying:

He, who is educated but indulges
 in greed, pride and craving,
 Should be reckoned ignorant
 inspite of all his education.³⁹

Similarly, cautioning all concerned, he advised :

A literate man who sins,
 should not be spared.
 Neither a good man be punished,
 because he is illiterate.⁴⁰

According to his own test of merit in this respect :

He alone is really learned
 who does good to others.⁴¹

Alternate renderings :

True learning induces in the mind

Service of the people.

Or

True learning induces one

to become altruistic and do good to others.

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27. ਜੇ ਚਲਦਾ ਲੈ ਚਲਿਆ, ਕਿਛੁ ਸੰਪੈ ਨਾਲੇ॥
ਤਾ ਧਨੁ ਸੰਚਹੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਕੈ, ਬੁਝਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ॥

Ibid., Raga Asa. M.I., p. 418.

28. ਇਸੁ ਜਰ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਘਣੀ ਵਿਗੁਤੀ,
ਇਨਿ ਜਰ ਘਣੀ ਖੁਆਈ॥
ਪਾਪਾ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ,
ਮੁਇਆ ਸਾਥਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥

Ibid., op.cit., Raga Asa, M.I. 417.

29. ਖਸਮੈ ਭਾਵੈ ਓਹੋ ਚੰਗਾ,
ਜਿ ਕਰੇ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਖੁਦਾਇ॥

Ibid., Raga Malhar, M.I., p. 1286.

30. ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਅਪਨਾ,
ਇਕੁ ਰਾਮੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ॥

Ibid., Raga Prabhati, M.I., p. 1342.

31. ਮਤੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭੂਲਾ ਵੀਸਰੈ,
ਤੇਰਾ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨਾਉ॥

Ibid., Raga Sri, M.I., p. 14.

32. ਪਾਣੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਣ ਪਵਣਿ ਬੰਧਿ ਰਾਖੇ,
ਚੰਦ੍ਰ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਦੀਏ॥
ਮਰਣ ਜੀਵਣ ਕਉ ਧਰਤੀ ਦੀਨੀ,
ਏਤੇ ਗੁਣ ਵਿਸਰੇ॥

Ibid., Raga Ramkali, M.I., p. 877.

33. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮਨਹੁ ਵਿਸਾਰੀਐ
ਜਾ ਕੇ ਜੀਅ ਪਰਾਣ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਣੁ ਸਭੁ ਅਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ,
ਜੇਤਾ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਖਾਣੁ॥

Ibid., Raga Sri, M.I., p. 16.

34. ਝੂਠੁ ਨ ਬੋਲਿ ਪਾਡੇ !
ਸਚੁ ਕਹੀਐ॥...

Ibid., Raga Ramkali, M.I., p. 904.

35. ਛੋਡੀਲੇ ਪਾਖੰਡਾ॥
ਨਾਮਿ ਲਇਐ, ਜਾਹਿ ਤਰੰਦਾ॥

Ibid., Raga Asa, M.I., p. 471.

36. ਸਚਿ ਕਾਲੁ ਕੂੜੁ ਵਰਤਿਆ,
ਕਲਿ ਕਾਲਖ ਬੇਤਾਲ॥
ਬੀਉ ਬੀਜਿ ਪਤਿ ਲੈ ਗਏ,
ਅਬ ਕਿਉ ਉਗਵੈ ਦਾਲਿ॥....
ਗਿਆਨੀ ਨਚਹਿ ਵਾਜੇ ਵਾਵਹਿ,
ਰੂਪ ਕਰਹਿ ਸੀਗਾਰੁ॥

ਉਚੇ ਕੂਕਹਿ ਵਾਦਾ ਗਾਵਹਿ,
 ਜੋਧਾ ਕਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ॥
 ਮੂਰਖ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਹਿਕਮਤਿ ਹੁਜਤਿ,
 ਸੰਜੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਿਆਰੁ॥
 ਧਰਮੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਗਾਵਾਵਹਿ,
 ਮੰਗਹਿ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰੁ॥
 ਜਤੀ ਸਦਾਵਹਿ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ,
 ਛਡਿ ਬਹਹਿ ਘਰ ਬਾਰੁ॥
 ਸਕ ਕੇ ਪੂਰਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੋਵੈ,
 ਘਟਿ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਆਖੈ॥
 ਪਤਿ ਪਰਵਾਣਾ ਪਿਛੈ ਪਾਈਐ,
 ਤਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੋਲਿਆ ਜਾਪੈ॥

Ibid., Raga Asa, M.I., pp. 468-69.

37. ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵਿਹੂਣਾ ਗਾਵੈ ਗੀਤ॥
 ਭੁਖੇ ਮੂਲਾਂ ਘਰੇ ਮਸੀਤਿ॥
 ਮਖਣੁ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਕੰਨ ਪੜਾਏ॥
 ਫਕਰੁ ਕਰੇ, ਹੋਰੁ ਜਾਤਿ ਗਵਾਏ॥
 ਗੁਰੂ ਪੀਰੁ ਸਦਾਏ ਮੰਗਣ ਜਾਏ॥
 ਤਾ ਕੈ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਲਗੀਐ ਪਾਇ॥

Ibid., Raga Asa, M.I., p. 1245.

38. ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ, ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ,
 ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ॥

Ibid., Raga Sarang, M.I., p. 1245.

39. ਪਤਿਆ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਆਖੀਐ,
 ਜਿਸੁ ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰਾ॥

Ibid., Raga Majh, M.I., p. 140.

40. ਪਤਿਆ ਹੋਵੈ ਗੁਨਹਗਾਰੁ,
 ਤਾ ਓਮੀ ਸਾਧੁ ਨ ਮਾਰੀਐ॥

Ibid., Rag Asa, M.I., p. 469.

41. ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ,
 ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ॥

Ibid., Rag Asa, M.I., p. 356.

THE INSTITUTION OF DHARAMSALA : ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Balwant Singh Dhillon

I. Introduction

The early history of the Sikh Panth shows that the Sikh religious establishment called the *gurdwara*, gradually evolved from its earlier counterpart known as *dharamsala*. Early Sikh sources are replete with accounts that the *dharamsala* stood at the very centre of the community life of the Sikhs. Moreover, historical experience of the community confirms that it proved to be such a perfect precursor to the *gurdwara* and so easily slipped into its role that transition from *dharamsala* to the *gurdwara* is hardly noticeable in the Sikh literature. Hence, the study of the institution of the *dharamsala*, its origin and functioning with reference to its role in early Sikh history has become imperative for better understanding of the *gurdwara* and its legislation.

II. Genesis and Growth

Theologically speaking, for a Sikh whole of this earth is veritably a *dharamsala*, a place to practise *dharama*. However, the origin of *dharamsala*, where the early Sikhs used to meet for worship and devotion, can be traced back to the times of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. A cursory glance at the Sikh sources reveals that during the itineraries of Guru Nanak quite a few people felt attracted to his faith. Wherever Guru Nanak found his disciples, he not only organised them into congregational circle (*sangat*) but motivated them also to build a religious centre, the *dharamsala*. Obviously, the *dharamsala* presupposes a Sikh *sangat* which was infact a

pre-requisite for its emergence at a particular place. We come across instances in Sikh history where neophyte Sikhs took upon themselves to found the *dharamsala*, so that the mission of the great Guru may be carried on. Bhai Gurdas remarks about its origin:

Wherever Guru Nanak visited that place became a place of worship. The most important centres including those of the jogis visited by the Guru became spiritual centres. Even houses have been turned into *dharamsalas* where *kirtan* was sung on the eve of Baisakhi.

After his sojourn in different lands and people, Guru Nanak settled at Kartarpur (now in Pakistan) where people from different walks of life belonging to different denominations, coming from far and wide gathered around him to hear his sermon. Subsequently, he founded a religious centre known as *dharamsala* which became a nucleus of his ministry. Evidently the origin of *dharamsala* is not obscure but a well-known fact of Sikh history.

The Sikh sources confirm that the *dharamsalas* initially came into being at the instance of the Sikh Gurus. In fact to organise the Sikhs into well-knit units such centres were of an utmost necessity. Towards the close of 16th century, besides Kartarpur there were Khadur, Goindwal, Ramdasapur, Tam Taran, Kartarpur (Doaba) and Sri Hargobindpur which developed into important Sikh centres primarily because they had been founded by the Sikh Gurus themselves. With the introduction of the institutions of *manji* and later on the *masand* system, the Sikhs appointed on these institutions played significant role to build up *dharamsalas* in their respective areas and zones. There is every likelihood that some of the devout and spirited Sikhs might have had performed yeomans' services to found *dharamsalas* at different places of Punjab and country as well. With the return of *Udasis* into the fold of mainstream, Guru Hargobind and the Sikh Gurus following him, deputed them to preach the Sikh mission to distant lands. It seems, the

Udasi preachers proved particularly useful to rejuvenate the *dharamsalas* established by Guru Nanak outside the Punjab which perhaps had become disfunctional due to lack of contact with the central Sikh religious authority. Unfortunately, scholars are not aware of the fact that in spite of the hostile attitude of the Mughals, Guru Hargobind had a remarkable success to expand the network of *dharamsalas* not only in the Punjab region but also in other parts of India. Guru Tegh Bahadur's missionary tours in the Malwa region of Punjab and North-eastern India proved very fruitful to add a few more centres to the already existing centres in these regions. Besides, the Punjabi *khatris* who embraced Sikhism and had settled at the major trade centres of the country, especially situated on the trade routes, also contributed in a very significant manner to establish *dharamsalas* at their respective places. In modern times, the diaspora Sikhs who migrated to settle in different parts of the world are performing the same job to spread the message of Sikhism among the immigrant Sikhs and natives as well through the institution of *gurdwara*.

As it was expected, the *dharamsala* pre-supposes a Sikh congregation. In other words to conceive it without a Sikh *sangat*, is hard to believe. The *dharamsalas* might have come up at those places where the Sikhs had a sizeable number. Most of the *dharamsalas* came up at those places which had been sanctified by the Sikh Gurus themselves. They were built up either to commemorate their sacred memory or to enshrine the holy relics associated with them. Hence, such *dharamsalas* were attraction of special reverence and subsequently got prominence over the local or community *dharamsalas*. If we look into the history of various *dharamsalas* we will not be surprised to find that every *dharamsala* is a living testimony to the glorious saga of Sikh tradition and has much in store to inspire the future generation of the Sikhs.

Though, the institution of *dharamsala* flourished in time and space yet to ascertain its purpose and status, observations of the *B. 40 Janamsakhi* are very significant. While describing Guru Nanak's interview with God, the author of above *Janamsakhi*, writes how God has revealed Himself to the Guru:

You are Nanak and your Panth will flourish. Your followers shall be called *Nanak Panthis* and their salutation shall be ਪੈਰੀ ਪਉਣਾ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ, I shall bless your Panth. Inculcate men's devotion towards Me and strengthen their obedience to *dharma*. As the *Vaishnavas* have *ramsals* (temple), the Jogis have their *asans* (seats) and the Muslims their mosques, so your followers shall have their *dharamsala*.

Two very significant points emerge out of this. Firstly, for the Sikhs the *dharamsala* was a divinely ordained institution. Resultantly, to build it or contribution towards it in any manner was to participate in a divine mission. Secondly, it provided the Sikhs an alternative locus for worship which was quite distinct from those of the other denominations. Thus, to evolve as well as preserve the Sikh identity at an earlier stage of Sikh history, the institution of *dharamsala* had played an important role which is equally needed now in the *gurdwaras*.

The evidence at our disposal suggests that the institution of *dharamsala* was introduced in Indian sub-continent almost simultaneously with the foundation of Sikhism. In the century that followed with the active involvement of the Sikh Gurus and the hard work put into by the Sikh missionaries the *dharamsala* became an essential and distinctive symbol of Sikhism. Within a short span of time the entire country, especially the Punjab and trade routes running between Chitagong and Kabul on the one hand, Agra and Burhampur on the other, were found studded with the Sikh *dharamsalas*.

III. Obstacles in Growth

Notwithstanding the phenomenal success to found the *dharamsalas* in different regions and cities of the country, the Sikh mission had to face strong opposition from some vested interests. Traditionally, the Sikh Gurus were least interested to establish their *dharamsalas* with assistance of any kind from the Mughal State. The *sakhi* relating to a *karoria* opposing Guru Nanak, clearly depicts that some of the local Mughal officials working at the lower rungs of the administration were not favourably inclined towards the *dharamsalas* coming up in the areas falling under their jurisdiction. Similarly, Goinda Marwaha, a *chaudhry* of Goindwal wanted to drive away Guru Amar Das simply because the Guru had declined his demand to part away with a share from the offerings of the *dharamsalas*. Noorudin's attempt to forcibly take away the construction material meant for the *dharamsala* of Tarn Taran depicts well the jealous and hostile attitude of the Mughal officials. For Emperor Jahangir the Sikh *dharamsala* was no more than a *dukan-i-batil* (shop of falsehood) which he desired to shut down at the earliest. The desecration of Sikh *dharamsala* to erect a mosque in its place at Lahore, is a clear testimony of religious vandalism of the times of Emperor Shah Jahan. Even the general order of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb of 1669, to demolish the temples of infidels, had no less effect on the Sikh religious places of worship. Although, above examples are sporadic yet they are pointer to the fact that political situation has not been always congenial for the development of *dharamsalas*.

Furthermore, the diverse elements within the Sikh Panth, especially the disgruntled progeny of the Sikh Gurus, posed a serious threat to the smooth functioning of the *dharamsalas*. Besides their claim for succession to guruship, they asserted their hereditary claim to the centres founded by the Gurus and declined to part away with their possessions. Most of the Sikh Gurus had to move out of those centres

which had been founded by their predecessors. For instance, the *Minas* posed to be very serious and genuine contenders for guruship as they feared not to establish parallel *dharamsalas* having a bearing on the mainstream of Sikhism. Resultantly, in the absence of Sikh Gurus from the *Majha* and *Doaba* regions of the Punjab, most of the *dharamsalas* including those at Amritsar and Kartarpur (Doaba) fell into the hands of the *Minas* and *Dhirmalias*. At some places the Sikh *dharamsalas* were also an eye sore to the men of other religious denominations. Goindwal and Nanakmata are two such examples where the *Shaikhs* and the *Jogis* respectively, opposed the Sikhs from developing their centres. Perhaps they feared that by establishing *dharamsalas*, the Sikhs were invading the religious boundaries of their spiritual domains. Such ugly situations were averted by the persuasive skills and timely intervention by the Sikh Gurus. In future such type of opposition to the *gurdwara* may develop in any part of the world but the Sikh leadership has to face the crisis in the light of Path shown by the Sikh Gurus and their missionaries working in difficult times.

IV. Physical Structure

As mentioned earlier for the Sikhs the entire earth is as sacred as a *dharamsala*, where they are supposed to perform their religious and temporal activities in accordance with the *dharma*. Secondly, Sikhism does not believe that God resides at a specific place or in a particular direction. Only because of that unlike the Hindu temples and the Muslim mosques, the Sikh *dharamsalas* were not built on axis oriented directions. The early *dharamsala* may have been small and simple structure usually consisting a single room large enough to hold a congregation of the local Sikhs. Most of the early Sikhs belonged to working classes and were not financially so well off. Presumably the local or community *dharamsalas* which had propped up in country side, small towns and *qasbas* were simple oratories for daily prayers. With the codification of Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth* became the

prized possession of the *dharamasalas*, which was duly installed and prominently displayed at the congregational hall. These *dharamasalas* were generally without big complex and decorative furnishings which we usually observe in modern day *gurudwaras*. In an urban or rural setting, the *dharamsala* was a landmark to establish the identity of Sikh populace residing in the immediate neighbourhood. We do not know whether to build a *dharamsala* permission from the administration was necessary or not but one can visualize that it certainly constituted recognition or consent of a group of Sikhs or the local Sikh community.

Since, Sikhism has enjoined upon its followers to observe external as well as internal purity, eventually, *isnan*, customary bath in the early morning has developed into an essential religious practice. Early Sikh literature abounds in evidence about the merits of *isnan* and its popularity among the early Sikhs. That was the basic reason that the *dharamsala* complex often included provisions for public bath. Wherever natural sources of water were not available, the *dharamsala* complex had a *baoli*, well or *rehat* (Persian Wheel) in its court-yard or a water-pool adjoining to it, which besides supplying water for customary bath, overcame the scarcity of water of the locality.

The *dharamsala* right from its very inception had a *langar* (community kitchen) attached to it. Later on *langar* acquired the status of an essential institution and formed an integral part of the *dharamsala* complex. Similarly, the *dharamsala* also comprised of a hospice, a common resting place where besides the Sikhs, the way-farers were permitted to stay for rest irrespective of caste and creed. Contemporary Sikh sources confirm that the Sikh faith progressed vigorously in the Punjab and on the trade routes intersecting the country at various points. Almost all the important towns falling on these routes had come to have *dharamsalas*. With the development of Sikh Panth, the *sangats* led by their respective *manjidars* and *masands* had started paying annual visits to the Sikh gurus on the eve of religious festivals. For the smooth movement of the Sikh *sangats* from either directions arrangement for

boarding and lodging was needed. Resultantly, on the pattern of premier *dharamsala* almost all the *dharamsalas* found located on or near the highways also set up *langars* and caravan serais. Both the *langar* and caravan-serai functioned within the precincts of the *dharamsala* and formed an essential feature where hospitality and food was freely available to the visitors.

Interestingly, some of the *dharamsalas* also had an arrangement to look after the sick and infirm. Some of the *sangtias* carried on their medical services for the people from the precincts of the *dharamsalas*. Readers will not be surprised to note that to meet the requirement of cots some of the *dharamsalas* also contained small carpentry workshops.

V. Administration and Functionaries

Some main *dharamsalas* of historical significance that had come up at places directly or indirectly connected with the lives of the Sikh Gurus were generally administered by the gurus themselves. During the period under review, the most important office at the premier *dharamsala* was that of the Guru, while the others were looked after by the *sangtias*, *masands* or the local Sikhs. At the central level, besides leading the Sikhs in the daily morning and evening prayers, the Guru was to oversee all the religious services namely, the *Kirtan* and recitation of *Gurbani*. The Guru also received visitors to the *dharamsala*, held dialogues and delivered sermons to explain the quintessence of Sikhism to them. Besides, generating the financial resources of the *dharamsala* in the form of *Daswandh*, *Kar-bhent*, etc., he ensured proper functioning of the *langar*. Since, the office of guruship combined multifarious responsibilities, there were a number of Sikhs at *dharamsala* to assist the Guru. Firstly, there were *hazoori* Sikhs, who remained always in attendance to carry on the job assigned to them. With the codification of the *Adi Granth*, the office of the *granthi* had come to stay at *dharamsala*. He was the chief custodian of

scripture and presided over the liturgical services. The practice to recite the scripture serially had also come in vogue among the early Sikhs. Possibly there were some *Pathis* (reciters) at *dharamsala* to perform the duty. Since the *Kirtan* was one of the popular mode of devotion consequently there were some professional *ragis* and *rababbis*, retained to perform the job at *dharamsala*. Likewise there were some expert theologians and preachers who explained the message of the Sikh Gurus to the general masses. Printing technology had not yet invented, so there were some scribes to prepare the copies of the scripture for distribution among the *Sangats*. Some of the scribes gifted with good penmanship and scholarly attainments were entrusted to draft the *Hukamnamas* addressed from the central *dharamsala* to various Sikh *Sangats*. As the *langar* was an essential part of the *dharamsala*, preparation of food and its distribution was an important duty which was always assigned to a senior and most resourceful Sikh. Towards the end of 17th century, the traditional Sikh sources refer to the office of *Diwan* at the *dharamsala*, who perhaps assisted the Guru to manage the finances.

The community of local *dharamsalas* were known by the name of place to which they belonged. Some of them gained prominence after the name of a leading Sikh responsible for their maintenance. Financially these *dharamsalas* were not dependent on the central authority rather they were self-dependent units. Their maintenance and administration was the obligation of local Sikh community. Since, the Sikhs had no clergy or priestly class to manage their religious places, any learned but an adult Sikh possessing proper knowledge of the Sikh scripture and theological matters could lead the Sikhs to perform the religious services at the *dharamsala*. At an earlier stage the Sikhs who had consecrated their lives to the service of *dharamsala* or those who had joined it for their spiritual betterment played an important role to look after the *dharamsala* affairs. Their role was not that of any professional nature because they carried on their worldly pursuits to earn their

livelihood. With the introduction of *manji* and later on *masand* system, the management of these *dharamsalas* came under the purview of the Sikhs holding these institutions. However, some of the *dharamsalas* remained under the charge of trusted Sikhs who were well-known for their knowledge of *Gurbani*, personal piety, honesty and dedication towards the Guru. Besides, the *dharamsala* they also headed the Sikh *sangats* of their respective places hence they were known as *sangtias*. There is no denying the fact that in pre-Khalsa period, the most important person to administer the *dharamsalas* at regional or provincial level, was the *masand*. The *masands* were the appointees and representatives of the Guru who carried on missionary work on behalf of the Guru at distant places. Primarily they collected the *daswandh* (tithe) and *bhent* (voluntary offerings) from the Sikhs of their respective areas and submitted the same to the Gurus at their centres. Besides, they managed the *dharamsala* finances and looked after the proper functioning of *langar* and hospice as well. Akin to the diocese and *Wilayats* of the Christians and Sufis respectively, the *masand* system contributed a lot to the development of *dharamsala* in different parts of the country. As the *masand* combined in himself multifarious duties, the chief *masands* were authorised to appoint their deputies or *gumashitas* to assist them. They in return exercised the authority of their masters in *dharamsala* at *qasba* or small towns. The chief *masand* stood at the apex of the whole system and controlled a net-work of *dharamsalas* spread over the region or province assigned to him. We observe that the *masands* of Patna, Burhampur and Kabul had attained such a prominence that the *dharamsalas* falling in North-east, South and N.W.F.P., were administered by them from these centres. Thus a hierarchy of functionaries had come to exist to administer the *dharamsalas* in different regions and cities of the country. Every *dharamsala* was headed by an official who could be a *manjidar*, *masand* or *Sangtia*. Their office was not professional and hereditary. Invariably they were the leaders of the *sangat* to which the

dharamsala belonged. However these leaders could not claim a divine status to indulge themselves in self-aggrandisement. Even now a system needs to be devised to train the administrative personnel (machinery) for proper management of the institution of the *gurudwara* in India and abroad.

VI. Financial Resources

Building of *dharamsala*, its maintenance, the *langar* and hospice, projects of water pools and wells and to support the functionaries involved, all required large outlays of funds. To seek state patronage has never been the policy of the Sikh Gurus. Who bore the costs? What were the fiscal resources? and what was the mechanism to collect them? are some of the questions which draw our attention. The policy of refusing state help speaks of all the Sikhs contributing towards *dharamsala* and its allied institutions. Historical experience of the Sikh community suggests that to raise, maintain and run the *dharamsala* complex had always been the obligation of the Sikh *sangat*. The Sikh Gurus had enjoined upon their Sikhs to earn their livelihood honestly and share it with others. It is worth noting that *dan* (charity) was and is one of the cardinal virtues of the Sikhs. In Sikhism, *dan* has never been reserved for a priestly class. It should be given either to a deserving person or spent for a rightful cause. Resultantly, the virtue of *dan* found its manifestation in the services of the *dharamsala*. It provided a definite direction and meaning to the charities given by the Sikhs. Hence at an earlier stage *dan* in the form of voluntary contribution was the major fiscal source of the *dharamsala*. It was an act of piety and goodwill and there was no binding of exact amount. Presumably, it was given in cash or in kind. During the pontificate of Guru Arjan Dev *dan* was supplemented with *daswandh* (tithe) which was made obligatory on the part of the Sikhs and its collection was entrusted to the *masands*.

Besides the *daswandh*, there were some non-obligatory

donations which enhanced the financial resources of the *dharamsala*. Firstly, there was a *golak*, a box meant for collection of offerings. It was kept in the *dharamsala* hall where the Sikhs on their visits used to put in something voluntarily. Secondly, we come across *sukh-manat*, a sort of thanks giving tribute which the Sikhs offered on fulfilment of their desire. Thirdly, there was a practice among the Sikhs to donate some amount for the welfare of *dharamsala* on the occasion of marriage known as *kurmai*. Fourthly, there was *chulia*, vow to donate something in the memory of dead. Fifthly, there was a strong practice among the Sikhs to set apart some amount from their earnings in the name of Guru and present the same to the *dharamsala*. Sixthly, there was *kar-bhent*, a special compaign to collect money or material to fulfil the specific needs of the central as well as local *dharamsala*. Lastly, charity in the form of grain and produce was also a big source of income of the *dharamsala*. An early 17th century source exhorts the Sikhs to carry something in kind while visiting the *dharamsala*. Obviously, it added to the provisions of the *langar*.

VII. Collection And Disbursement

At the beginning of Sikhism there was no agency to collect the offerings and transmit the same to the local or central *dharamsala*. Charities came to *dharamsala* voluntarily either in cash or in kind--grain, produce, cloth or commodities. It was during the days of Guru Arjan Dev that the *masands* were entrusted to collect the *daswandh* from the Sikhs. Hence afterwards the practice of bringing obligatory and non-obligatory donations to the central *dharamsala*, came into vogue. The *masands* of the various regions and cities used to visit the Sikh Gurus on the eve of *Baisakhi* or any other annual festival and used to present the offerings collected from the Sikhs to the Guru at his court. The amount collected as charities was also submitted through the *hundi*, bill of exchange. It seems the *masands* or *sangtias* who were not in a position to visit the Guru personally sent their collections through this mode.

Though, there were no specific directives to utilize the *dharamsala* funds yet we can visualize that they were spent for the propagation of the Sikh faith and the public welfare. Obviously, the *dharamsala* funds were used for building *dharamsala* complex, to run the *langar* and hospice, to promote the study of Sikh scripture and other educational and missionary activities. It could also be used to meet the expenses of *mewras* and on their hospitality, who travelled long distances to deliver the *Hukamnamas* and message of the Gurus to the various Sikh *sangats*. *Dharamsala* funds could also be used to finance the specific requirements of the Gurus. In the days of armed Sikh struggle with the *Mughals* the Sikh Gurus made an effective use of these funds to replenish the military resources of the Sikh Panth. Interestingly most of the *masands* or *sangtias* responsible for the collection of offerings were engaged in some profession. They were not supposed to appropriate the offerings on their personal well-being. However, those who had no other means of livelihood were allowed to use the offerings other than cash. The *masand* or *sangtia* incharge of the *dharamsala* was only a trustee and he was not supposed to misappropriate the *dharamsala* funds. Bhai Gurdas has decreed in strongest terms that it was totally unlawful to covet an eye on the offerings brought to *dharamsala*.

VIII. Cultic Activities

The *dharamsala* was the main centre of the religious activities of the Sikhs. Fortunately, in the medieval Sikh literature details of the daily routine of the *dharamsala* are available. Sikhism formally prescribes both the personal and corporate way of worship. Individual worship was to be carried at home, whereas the congregational¹ worship was to be performed in the *dharamsala*. Significantly, both the individual and congregational worship were similar in contents. Though, the Sikh tradition does not specify any standardised benediction linking God to the specific circumstances of the moment, however worship was carried out

daily in the morning and evening. At the *dharamsala* contents of the public worship were relegated to the Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth*. Besides, the recitation of sacred texts, we find that the *Japu* had come to form an integral part of the morning liturgy. Similarly, recitation of *Sodar*, *Aarti* and *Sohila* in the evening were practised by the early Sikhs. Wherever the trained Sikh musicians well-versed in the Sikh tradition were available *Kirtan* sessions became a part of the daily programme of the *dharamsala*. Since, the Sikh Gurus always encouraged their followers to recite and listen the *gurbani*, eventually a serialized reading of the scripture from the beginning to the end became a practice in the religious way of life in a *dharamsala*. Similarly to explain the basic tenets of Sikhism or subtle meaning of *gurbani* to novices and inquirers from other traditions, exegetical assemblies, debates and inter-faith dialogues began to be held in the *dharamsala*. Infact the entire fulcrum for the whole system of worship at *dharamsala* was the *pothis* of *gurbani* and later on the *Adi Granth*. We come to know that besides the daily programme, additional or special services were also conducted on *gurpurabs* and religious festivals such as *Baisakhi*, *Diwali*, *Maghi* and *Holi*.

We may summarize that the classic Sikh mode of worship centred on the *bani*, the Word of God. In a way God's Word (*bani*) coupled with a share from His bounties were presented to God at *dharamsala* and in return God's commandment (ਵਾਕ) was proclaimed. The Word of God as manifested in the *bani* of the Sikh Gurus constituted the subject matter of worship and religious services to be conducted at the *dharamsala*. Towards the end of worship or religious service prayer was offered and *Karah Parsad* (consecrated pudding) was distributed among the assembled people to mark the Grace of God.

IX. Social and Educational

It needs to be underlined that the *dharamsala* was not merely a religious place but a centre of social and educational significance as

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well. It occupies a pivotal place in the temporal as well as religious life of the Sikh community. As described above the *sangat* is a concept basic to the *dharamsala*. Sikhism instead of dividing the temporal and religious into water tight departments, desires harmony between the two. Consequently, *sangat* was generally the centre for secular as well as religious practices.

Our sources suggest that the *dharamsala* had always served as centre of education and Sikh learning. Infact *dharamsalas* were guidance centres wherein the participants and entrants were ushered to the Sikh way of life. They had also arrangements to impart teachings in *gurumukhi*, Sikh music and the scripture. For this purpose *dharamsala* served to be the most continuous and reliable centre of education for the students of Sikhism. We can visualize how the study circles gathered around the *granthi* in the courtyard of *dharamsala* went through the learning process. We notice that some of the *dharamsalas* emerged as famous centres of educational activities. Teaching in *dharamsalas* continued even after the proliferation of schools and colleges. In modern times the educational functions of the community *dharamsala* have been totally taken over by speicalized institutions. However, to transmit the knowledge of *gurmukhi*, *gurbani* and Sikh cultural values, the *gurdwaras* can still play a vital role but to attract the students we have to upgrade its educational system.

Besides this, the courtyard of the *dharamsalas* also had been the favoured place of pulic assembly where the *diwans* (religious assemblies) and *jor melas* (religious festivals) were held to address issues of politics, war, religion and so forth. Even the Sikh *Panchayats* held their courts to pronounce decision on the contentious issues concerning the Sikh community. The issue resolved at these assemblies reflected not only the common will of the Sikh community but also carried out divine sanction because it had been thrashed and proclaimed from the holy precinct of the *dharamsala*. Hence, the Sikhs were under religious

obligation to submit to the decision.

Unlike the religious places of some other traditions the *dharamsala* did accommodate the services related to family life. The ceremonies of marriage, birth, death and initiation were perhaps arranged in the *dharamsala* compound.

While visiting the *dharamsala* the Sikhs had to perform two types of duties--personal religious obligation and the collective management and maintenance of the *dharamsala* and its allied structures. Bhai Gurdas provides a graphic account of the odd chores performed by the Sikhs to run the *dharamsala* properly. He observes how the Sikhs used to wave fan to comfort the *sangat* from the heat. Someone was drawing water to help the Sikhs to wash their feet or to take customary bath. Similarly some were busy in grinding corn to prepare food for the *langar*. Some one was bringing fuel wood for the community kitchen. They did not feel shy to fuel the oven for cooking in the *langar*. They happily shook the dust off the prayer carpets of the *dharamsala*. Even they did not hesitate to massage the tired visitors. They always lent a helping hand to distribute food in the *langar*. In a way the institution of *dharamsala* provided an ample opportunity to the Sikhs to practise the virtue of *sewa*.

X. Pilgrimages

Sikhism does not propagate the notion of obligatory pilgrimage that worshipping God at a particular site is more efficacious. Unlike the Hindu notion of pilgrimage, mere visit to the *dharamsala* without imbibing the higher values, was not considered a sure way to liberation, our information about the religious festivals of the period on which the Sikhs used to perform pilgrimage to the central *dharamsala* is not so meagre. From the contemporary records we find that besides the *Baisakhi*, *Dewali*, *Maghi* and *Holi*, auspicious days (*Gurpurabs*) related to the lives of the Sikh Gurus were celebrated by the Sikhs publicly at central as well as provincial level *dharamsalas*. On these

occasions the Sikhs were required to appear before the Guru, bearing offerings and presents, at a pilgrimage centre inhabited by the Guru. Those who could not make the annual pilgrimage celebrated these festivals at the community *dharamsalas*. Since, the new month *Sangrand* whether of solar or lunar calendar was considered auspicious by the people, the Sikh tradition made effective use of them to celebrate in a different manner at *dharamsala*.

XI. Spiritual Environment

The *dharamsala* always served as a centre of Sikh spirituality. It led the way to achieve summum-bonum while residing in the family and society. It was a place where higher values like *dhiraj* (serenity), *dharama*, truth etc. dominated the environment. Guru Arjan Dev refers to atmosphere at *dharamsala* where instead of rancour, humility prevailed all around. In the words of Bhai Gurdas, the *dharamsala* alone possessed that spiritual tranquility which a seeker longed for in atmosphere of worldly tension. He is very emphatic to state that the disturbing effect of worldly wealth (*maya*) on the minds of the men could be removed only by experiencing the spiritual environment of the *dharamsala*. He compares it with *Mansarover* lake where *Gursikh* like swans assemble in the congregation. Throughout the Sikh literature the *dharamsala* and its successive institution, the *gurdwara* has been referred as the abode of God. According to Bhai Gurdas, the *dharamsala* served as an earthly residence for God and atmosphere designed to replicate His celestial kingdom. It was perfectly natural therefore that the Sikhs who were disgusted and frustrated with their personalities torn by inner conflicts, thronged to *dharamsala* in search of spiritual solace. A cursory glance at the *Sikhan di Bhagtmala*, affirms that the spiritual atmosphere of *dharamsala* not only soothed their excited nerves but integrated their personalities to the highest point of inner harmony to transform them into *Gurmukhs*. Unfortunately, the spiritual functions and environment that the Sikh Gurus evolved for the

institutions of *dharamsala* are lacking in our present day *gurdwaras*. Spiritual base of the community is eroding very fastly. We have to devise the ways and means to turn the *gurdwaras* into spiritually vibrant centres because it is the only antidote to save the future generations of the Sikhs from the ills of materialistic advancement of mankind.

XII. Entry and Quorum

The *dharamsala* and its allied institutions were open to any one, any time of the day. There was no restriction of caste and creed to find entry into it. Women were not debarred rather encouraged to join the congregation at *dharamsala*. Significantly, unlike the Muslim mosque, the *dharamsala* did not use a separate enclosure specially screened off for the women devotees. Infact Sikh Gurus enjoined upon the women not to observe *pardah* while visiting the *dharamsala*. The Sikh *dharamsala*, in the eyes of Bhai Gurdas, was such a unique religious place where Guru and disciples, men and women, high and low, young and old, all worshipped together. Sometimes we find that in some religions sancto-sanctum or inner-most area of the shrine is prohibited to the general public. Only clergy, priests or a few privileged persons have an access to it. Contrary to the above custom, every nook and corner of the *dharamsala* was open for public view.

Unlike the synagogue and mosque of the Jewish and Muslim community respectively, to hold the religious service at *dharamsala* no specific quorum has been fixed. The underlying idea behind it was that *dharamsala* services are continuous process. It should not distinguish between a small and large assembly. Even the needs of an individual visitor should be taken care of. However, to decide the community matters five Sikhs comprised the quorum to constitute a representative body of the community.

XIII. Sanctity

The *dharamsala* complex was considered a sacred place. One

was required to approach it with complete humility and purity of mind. Before entering the *dharamsala* the visitor has to ensure physical purity by taking customary bath (*isnan*). Similarly, to demonstrate proper reverence and respect, devotee has to put off shoes and cover his or her head. Disrespect to *bani* or the *Adi Granth* in any manner, interference in the functioning of *dharamsala* leading to break in regular or obligatory religious practices, were part of the sacrilege. Similarly, use of intoxicants and tobacco in the complex of *dharamsala* formed religious taboo. To preserve and protect the sanctity of their *dharamsalas*, has always been the sacred duty of the Sikh community. Following any defilement purification of the *dharamsala* complex and its courtyard was necessary to consecrate the complex afresh.

XIV. Conclusions

Besides celebrating the congregational worship, the *dharamsala* has also been the favoured place for public assembly where the Sikhs gathered to debate the religious as well as temporal issues concerning the community. Primarily it was a fountain head of Sikh spirituality which motivated the Sikhs to cherish the higher values. Every one in need of sympathy and help turned to it, since it was believed that the prayer performed by the *sangat* at *dharamsala* could heal the sick souls. Its role has been instrumental to evolve and preserve the Sikh identity and has contributed a lot to transmit it to the successive generations of the Sikhs.

THE INSTITUTIONS OF GURU(GURUSHIP), GURDWARA, SANGAT AND LANGAR

Dalbir Singh Dhillon

The emergence of the Sikh community was based on the ethical norms and that accompanied the formation of new institutions. The establishment of the institutions within the society is a process which evolves automatically with the environmental factor based on the religio-political dimension of the respective society¹, and continues as long as it serves the social need. After all an institution is the idea or a mode of relationship which is recognized and sanctioned by society. In the words of A.C. Das:

An institution is indeed regarded as a social value since it regulates some relationship between the individuals and individual in a social group so as to promote ethical development in them.²

The emerging Sikh institutions were based on the ethical doctrines of the Sikh Gurus and had a theistic *weltanschauung*.³ What facilitated their rapid growth in the sixteenth century was the fact that they reflected the social ideals which had strong 'continuity and integrity.' The most important and vital institution innovated by the first Guru, was the institution of Guruship. Had Guru Nanak not appointed his successor, Sikhism would have been 'Nanakism' like Kabirism.⁴ Guru Nanak's appointment of a successor was a fundamental and a unique factor not found in the other contemporary movements. It earmarked Sikhism as a distinct and a new faith and further helped the Sikhs to form a strong and well-knit community. Guru Nanak bestowed Guruship on Lehina, the future Guru Angad, after putting him under a series of test. Lehina

passed all the tests suited to Guruship only then he was offered Guruship by Guru Nanak. The selection of the successor from the devotees continued upto the third Guru, Guru Amar Das. After the fourth Guru, Guru Ram Das, it became hereditary, but continued to be the reward of devotion and obedience. The contribution of the nomination of successors by Sikh Gurus to the development of Sikhism can hardly be over-emphasised. Possibly among other reasons, the chief reason why the continuing nomination by each successive Guru made that large contribution was that these nominations ensured the selfless surrender and obedience to the house of Nanak.⁵ In the words of I.B. Banerjee, "...the fundamental ideal of surrender and devotion continued and played throughout the same prominent part in this all-important matter of nomination to the Guruship...."⁶ The ideal of surrender and devotion was sufficiently attested by the Sikh Gurus for the appointment of successor. However, the practice to nominate the best available man, after Guru Ram Das, became hereditary in the sense that the choice was confined to the sons. In Sikhism, the ideal of absolute and selfless surrender to Guru was one of the fundamental principles,⁷ and also it became the backbone for the selection of Sikh Gurus. Bhai Gurdas in his composition refers to the selfless surrender of a Sikh devotee.⁸ That was also the major qualification for the Guru designate. To quote Banerjee, "Guruship in Sikhism assumed a unique character".⁹

The institution of Guruship provided the Sikhs a protector and guardian of their religion and community. It also protected the continuous and harmonious ideals of the Sikhs from deviation, because "the Gurus were one and the same; there having been no change of spirit but only a change of image".¹⁰ The image was continuously hammered by the Sikh Gurus and its principle exponents. In the coronation ode, recorded in the *Adi Granth*, two bards, Satta and Balwand, have referred to the continuity of spirit of the guru's successor in the following words: "Lehina, the scion of Guru Nanak, exchanged bodies within and took possession of his throne".¹¹ Guru Nanak proclaimed according to

the two bards “the succession of Lehina as a reward of his service. He had the same light, the same Divine Spirit; the master merely changed his body”.¹² The *Janam Sakhi* literature also hammers the same theme when it throws light on how the Guruship was bestowed to a successor. According to *Janam Sakhi* tradition Guru Nanak finally selected Lehina as his successor, put five paisa before Guru Angad and prostrated before his feet.¹³ I.B.Benerjee is right when he observes : “...it must be regarded as a very significant fact. It shows that from the very beginning the impersonal character of the Guruship was recognised. The personality of the Guru was detached from the spirit of the Guruship, which was regarded as one, indivisible and continuous”.¹⁴ Bhai Gurdas’s explanation of why that was so is significant. According to him there is ‘an identity between the Guru and God’.¹⁵ The idea of the unity of Guruship is clear and consistent in the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas. According to these *Vars*:

Nanak struck his coin in the world and instituted the pure panth. In his life time he installed Lehina, with the umbrella of Guruship over his head. Blending light with light, the true Guru Nanak changed form , and performed a wonder of wonders which is beyond the comprehension of everyone. In Lehina’s body was infused the form of Nanak.¹⁶

The author of *Dabistan -i- Mazahib*, conscious of the Sikh belief on the subject explains the nature of the Sikh Guruship with the observation that “all the Gurus are identical with Nanak”.¹⁷ Undoubtedly, the Sikh view in the sixteenth century was that the Guruship was impersonal, indivisible and continuous.¹⁸

This concept of *Guru* in Sikhism was different from those of the other religious sects of the time. Indeed it did not subscribe to the “contemporary religious tradition”.¹⁹ In Sikhism :

the Guru stands for two things: revelation and practice of the truth through personal guidance, the truth as revealed in the Sacred Word does not require any change, as it incorporates bare fun-

damentals, like the belief in oneness of God and the approach to Him through love and service.²⁰

In Sikhism, the Guru was immortal guide and without Him “there is nothing but darkness”.²¹ The Guru in Sikhism, therefore, was ever new and whole. “He was ever evolving with the collective personality of the Sikhs working with the sense of the Guru in them”.²² With the impersonal and indivisible personality of the Guru, the institution of Guruship became ‘both unchanging and progressive’.²³ There was no change or distinction between Guru Nanak and his successors, “because they all are the ‘*patshah*’ of both *din and dunia*.”²⁴ In the words of J.S.Grewal:

if we were to choose one key -idea which lends unity to all these developments, it is surely the concept of Guru, which at once reconciled the uniqueness of Guru Nanak’s position to the authority rested in his successors through that office which, at a different level, brought the *bani* and the *panth* in parallel prominence with the personal Guruship, which today is the fundamental belief of the majority of the followers of Guru Nanak, is a legacy from the times of his successors. This may be perhaps their most creative responses to the greatness of the founder of Sikhism.²⁵

The ‘Guru’ in Sikhism was, therefore, an object of devotion and his voice was the voice of God. Guru Nanak in his composition equated the Guru with God. He says:

Nanak: the boat of Truth ferries us across,
Through the wisdom of the Guru.

(Else), it is a (mere) coming-and-going for myriads of men full of ego.

The self-willed are drowned, the God-wards are saved by Truth.
How can one swim across, unaided by the Guru, and attain peace?²⁶

It would be wrong to say, as some scholars have said that Guru in Sikhism was becoming a 'symbol of material power.'²⁷ It would also be wrong to assume that the Guru in Sikhism was a 'temporal ruler' as has been done by some of the scholars.²⁸

The 'Guru' in Sikh theology came to be defined in the sixteenth century itself as that being, who had full knowledge of *Sat Purukh* or ever existing *Purush*. He was without enmity and was benevolent like God. Thus, the institution of Guru became the symbol of *Nirvan* because the disciple who acted according to the instructions of the Guru attained the ultimate bliss of *Nirvan* or *mukti*.

Thus, Guru in Sikhism came to be regarded perfect and helped others to be perfect. With the help of Guru alone one attained wisdom. Guru Arjan came to explain this Sikh concept of the Guru while explaining the impact produced by his first meeting with the Guru. He observed:

Having encountered the Guru,
I have attained to wisdom
And I contemplate the Name
As waves blend with water
So my light is blended with the Lord's Light.²⁹

A pure and perfect Guru could lead the society. If the ideal Guru was imperfect, the society and the individuals who constituted it would never be able to develop their personality and all their development was bound to remain imperfect.³⁰ Only selfless, pure and perfect Guru could dispel the darkness of delusion from the hearts of the devotees. He acted as an intermediary between God and man. The Guru was like a ship who carried man across the ocean of life. Guru Ram Das said in Rag Tukhari that:

The Guru is like a philosopher's stone.

And men are like the iron ore;
 O God, grant that one meets such a person
 That the iron in us may be turned into gold.

The *Adi Granth* became an everlasting institution of 'Guru in Sikhism'.³¹ Through the Guru's word man attained perfection. The concept of Guru in Sikhism was not an incarnation. He was God's trusted servant and messenger sent to the world, to encourage righteousness and to uproot evil.³² The Guru in Sikhism was a perfect man, who could convert a human being into his like. "The Guru resides in the Sikh. It is this belief which makes a Sikh a Superman".³³ Guru Ram Das said: "The Guru is the Sikh and the Sikh who practices the Guru's word is equal to the Guru".³⁴ It deserves notice that the Guru's word preserved in the form of scripture later came to be put in a revered place called *Gurdwara*, an integrated and indispensable part of Sikh way of life. The Guru and finally his 'Word' as preserved in the scripture became the living feature of the Sikh tenets. The Tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh had invested the *Adi Granth* with guruship, and commanded the Sikhs to accept it as their future Guru. As such Guru's 'Word' [scripture] was given status equal to the Guru himself and was placed on the raised place in the *Gurdwara*. The institution of *Gurdwara* not only originated but also got its development to honour the Guru's 'Word' or scripture.

The origin and development of the institution of the *Gurdwara* was important in the history of the rise and growth of Sikhism. *Gurdwara* came to mean many things: through the Guru, abode of the Guru, religious temples of the Sikhs, a building which had been established for preaching Sikh religion and where the *Adi Granth* is installed. Bhai Kahan Singh says that the Sikh religious places from the time of Guru Nanak to Guru Arjan were named as *dharamsalas* where the religious discourses were held either in the presence of a Guru or a Sikh devotee who presided over the congregation in the absence of the Sikh Guru.³⁵

Under the pontification of Guru Arjan the *dharmshalas* constructed earlier, became the prototype of *Gurdwaras*.³⁶ But the word *Gurdwara* in theological sense became popular when Guru Arjan was guiding the course of the Sikh religion particularly after the construction of Harimandir at Amritsar and the installation of the Holy Book. The use of the Harimandir for the newly raised religious abode of the *Granth* was significant. Harimandir literally, therefore meant the temple of God³⁷. It soon became synonym of *Gurdwara*, a *Gurmukhi* term for abode of *Guru*³⁸.

The use of the expression *Gurdwara* as a *mandir* or temple in technical sense occurs only once in the *Granth Sahib*.³⁹ In the holy *Granth* it was generally used to mean 'through the Guru', or 'through the help of the Guru'.⁴⁰ Other meanings given to the *Gurdwara* by recent scholars is an exercise in hair splitting. According to Indu Bhushan Banerjee *Gurdwara* "means temple built on a place visited by a Guru".⁴¹ Dr. Johar describes "Gurdwara as the house of the Guru where Guru himself resides".⁴² Banerjee says that by the time of Guru Arjan several *Gurdwaras* had already come into existence.⁴³

Dr. Johar hints at the purpose intended of the *Gurdwaras* even when the first one was constructed. While describing the purpose served by them now, he says, "a Gurdwara is built for congregation. Even a few people living at particular place anywhere in the world, can construct a *Gurdwara* for performing religious ceremonies. The building of the *Gurdwara* may be big or small, even as a temporary shack, depending on the resources of the devotees".⁴⁴ It is the right definition suited to the modern *Gurdwara*. So, the present day *Gurdwara* thus, means a Sikh temple or a Sikh Church,⁴⁵ in which spiritual Guru of the Sikhs i.e. the word of the Guru embodied in the *Adi Granth*, is ceremoniously installed. The institution of *Gurdwara* occupies a revered place in the Sikh history and theology. It is more than a mere place of worship.⁴⁶ It is revered and cuts the profane feelings of the Sikhs when they enter the threshold of the *Gurdwara*.⁴⁷

The term *Gurdwara* as such may be assumed as synonym of the term *dharmsala*⁴⁸ which had come into existence even during Guru Nanak's times. Establishment of the *dharmsalas* are frequently mentioned in the Sikh chronicles. According to the *Janam Sakhis*, after the Guru's visit to a particular place a *dharmsala* was established by the devotees there to hold their daily religious discourses.⁴⁹ Of course, it is very difficult to give the exact date of the first constructed *dharamsala*. One can, however, safely assert that the *dharmsala* was established quite early and much before they were converted into *Gurdwaras*. *Janam Sakhi* literature clearly states that *dharmsalas* were constructed even during the life time of Guru Nanak.⁵⁰

The institution of *Gurdwara*, thus germinated as *dharmasala* in the time of Guru Nanak himself but its proper development as an institution took place after Guru Nanak. Guru Angad's laying the foundation of a *dharmsala* at Khadur was a forward step in the same direction. *Shabad-kirtan* and *Guru ka langar* became two integrated parts of the *dharmsala* under the second Nanak. *Dharmasala* at Khadur also acquired some other special features. It also functioned as a school where 'Gurmukhi' script was taught.⁵¹ Under Guru Amar Das, the third Nanak, a *dharmasala* at Goindwal was another addition to the number of the *dharmasalas*. It also gave a new dimension to the functioning of a *dharmasala*. It now became an important centre of all Sikh activities. Under Guru Amar Das, the addition to *dharmasala* activities started a definite phase in the building of the Sikh Church.⁵² The fourth Nanak, Guru Ram Das, dug a tank over the land lying between the villages of Sultanwind, Tung, Gurntala and Gilwali. The neighbourhood of tank developed in the form of a town, known as Ram Das Pura, and it became the religious capital of the Sikhs⁵³. As already noted it soon became the *Gurdwara* and contributed to the conversion of earlier *dharmasalas* as its prototype elsewhere.

The institution of *Gurdwara*, in the sense of being the abode of

Guru as denoted by the terminology used for it developed in the later half of the sixteenth century during the Guruship of Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan laid the foundation of many new *Gurdwaras* and transformed the old *dharmsalas* into *Gurdwaras* where big congregations were henceforth continuously held. During his period *Gurdwaras* were built at Tarn Taran, Ram Sar, Kartarpur, Goindwal, Khadur, Amritsar and Lahore and became important centres of Sikh missionaries of the Punjab.⁵⁴

The development of the institution of *Gurdwara* in the sixteenth century resulted in a big rise in the status of Sikhism. From a sect it now became a new religion. The institution in its developed form under Guru Arjan helped the *Sikh Sangat* (Sikh society) to become a powerful community. *Gurdwara* became the symbol of hope for the depressed, destitute and miserable. The congregation in *Gurdwara* was united by a common bond of religion and the sufferings of the individual came to be considered to be the suffering of the all. It became the sacred duty of the Sikhs to work for the uplift and development of the institution of the *Gurdwara*.

The growth of the institution of the *Gurdwara* was accompanied by a new development in another institution. The *sangats* set up by Guru Nanak became the holy body or the *Sadh Sangat*. The *sangat* was the 'Organised Fellowship' of the Sikhs.⁵⁵ The Guru resided in the *sangat*. It was engaged in "congregational prayers" and organised "Sewa."⁵⁶ Guru Nanak during his *udasis* or travels felt the need of *sangats* which could guide and help the society overpowered by superstitions and superfluous religious beliefs and practices. Wherever he went, he left behind him a *sangat*, or association of his followers with an injunction to build a meeting place, for the purpose of meeting and singing his hymns together. A number of such meeting places soon came up, during the pontification of Nanak's three successors. They were known as *dharmsalas*. Each of these *sangats* present in the *dharmsala* was in the charge of a devotee appointed by the Guru.

The subsequent transformation of *sangats* into *Sadh Sangats* was facilitated by the original intention of Guru Nanak in setting up these *sangats*. It has been rightly observed that the “original idea of Guru Nanak himself in setting up the *sangats* appears to have been *Sat* or *Sadh Sangat*, i.e. association of the pious”.⁵⁸ Guru Nanak in one of his compositions says: “The *Sangat* is the society of the holy men. The Name of the God is mentioned there”.⁵⁹ For his Sikhs, *sangat* was an association of an individual with the ‘*Gurmukh*’. For such a *sangat* to become a *Sadh Sangat* was just a revered step. The holy *sangats* were holy congregations enjoined by Guru Nanak and his successors as a commingling of holy people, which had manifold advantages. Sitting in the *sangat* had great influence on one’s personality for even bad and wicked people could be reformed in the company of good people. This was more so because *sangats* of their conception repudiated distinctions of caste and birth and advocated the worship of only one God. They saw in the institution of *sangat* as the assembly of truth seekers and worshippers of God getting encouragement for the “*Nam*”⁶⁰. Guru Amar Das stated that “associating with the Truth, one attaineth truth and loveth the True *Nam*.”⁶¹

In setting up *sangats* Guru Nanak had offered two things to his Sikhs. They were: the ‘Word’ and the ‘Holy Fellowship’.⁶² It became a religious duty of “a Sikh to join the *sangat* and thereby share in the communal personality of the Guru”.⁶³ For this institution of *sangat* founded by Guru Nanak, it was natural to develop during the later half of the sixteenth century into that of *Sadh-Sangat*.

Under Guru Arjan’s dynamic leadership in the second half of the sixteenth century numerous *sangats* established by Guru Nanak became *Sadh Sangats*. Even a casual look in the daily pattern of the *sangat* established by Guru Nanak at Kartarpur, where he had finally settled, would make that clear. Here, at Kartarpur, a life of constant meditation was led by all his followers. Early in the morning his com-

position, *Japji* and *Asa-di-Var* were recited and in the evening *Sodar* was read. At night before sleep *Sohala* was read. Twice a day, after the morning and evening prayer, *Guru ka langar* was served to the *sangat*. The Kartarpur pattern was followed by all *sangats* established by Guru Nanak not only in the Punjab but over the whole of India.⁶⁴ The Kartarpur pattern became the norm for all *sangats* wherefrom his prominent disciples preached the new faith. It facilitated "Bhai Lallo preaching in the north and (Sheikh) Sajjan in the south-west of the Punjab. It also helped Gopal Das in Benaras, Jhanda Badi in Bushair, Budhan Shah in Kirtatpur, Mahi in Mahisar, Kaljug, a priest's son, in Jagannath Puri, Devlut in Lushai (Tibet), Salis Rai in Patna and Bihar, Raja Shivnabh in Ceylon, and a host of other workers scattered all over the territories visited by Guru Nanak in and outside India."⁶⁵

The transformation of *sangats* into *Sadh Sangats* was further accelerated by Guru Angad by improving upon the institution of *sangat* bequeathed by Guru Nanak. Under him the institution of *sangat* or the 'Organized Fellowship' became even more important feature of the Sikh way of life than during the time of Guru Nanak. It became the centre for religious assemblies throughout the year.⁶⁶ Here, the *sangat* at Khadur met twice a day, once in the morning and for the second time in the evening. '*Asa di Var*' was now sung to the musical tune of Satta and Balwand. Guru Angad used the *sangats* at places outside to impart instructions in such a way as to attract a large number of followers.⁶⁷ Guru Angad during his discourses in these *sangats* would repeatedly ask the devotees to repeat the Lord's Name, renounce pride and restrain desire.⁶⁸

In the times of Guru Amar Das the *sangat* became not only an important but also a regular feature of Sikh way of life. The *sangat*, during Guru Amar Das, used to assemble at Goindwal where *Guru ka langar* was served and the Sikhs treated one another so affectionately as if they were brothers. The Sikh society became integrated under the

bonds of religious institutions such as '*Sangat and Pangat*', *Guru-ka-langar*, *Sewa* and *Nam Simran*. The ethical norms began to develop which were subsequently codified.

The Sikh *sangat* in the times of Guru Ram Das, developed into the form of a community.⁶⁹ The number of the Sikh followers had reached thousands and the Sikh *Sangats* were formed in every part of the country. The *Sangat* had by now become a holy organisation and its attendance had become compulsory for the Sikhs as a religious duty. Guru Ram Das had galvanised the *sangats* by engaging them in the construction of the holy tank at Amritsar, by asking them to join in the excavation work of the tank. The Sikh *sangats* responded enthusiastically and came from the distant places to participate in the construction work of the holy tank. Guru Ram Das changed his ancestral house at Lahore into a *Gurdwara* and, here, he created a Sikh *sangat* for the preaching of Nanak's religion. "The Guru converted Handal of Jandiala at Goindwal, blessed him and asked him to return to his native town, repeat the Holy Name and initiate others into the faith of Baba Nanak. Handal formed the Sikh *sangat* at Jandiala."⁷⁰

Guru Arjan completed the construction work started at various places with the help and support of Sikh *sangats*.⁷¹ With the completion of the sacred tank and a strong centre a mighty *sangat* emerged at Amritsar. He organised *Sangats* elsewhere. Soon after constructing a *Baoli* (stepped well) at Dabi Bazar Lahore, he established a '*Sikh Sangat*' there also.⁷² He also visited the adjoining places of Lahore and Amritsar and established *sangats* for the preaching of Sikh religion.⁷³ With the formation of the Sikh canon and after its installation at Harimandir, Sikhism attained a definite form and the Sikhs began looking upon themselves as a community with an identity of its own.⁷⁴

The increase in the number of the *sangats* reflected the heightened religious consciousness of the community. It expressed itself in a new name, *Sadh Sangats* being invested to the *Sangats*. It empha-

sised the holy purpose for which the Sikh congregation was to meet in the years to come.

The importance of *Sadh-Sangat* in the history of Sikhism is extremely great.⁷⁵ Guru Arjan emphasised the importance of *Sadh-Sangat* when he referred to it as the 'indewelling house of God.'⁷⁶ In his composition *Sukhmani*, he described its importance while dilating on the sort of effect it produced on the individuals constituting it. He observed:

In the company of the saints
 The mind hindereth not wildly;
 In the company of the saints
 The soul attaineth to happiness;
 In the company of the saints
 Man glimpseth the indivisible;
 In the company of the saints
 He endureth the unendurable;
 In the company of the saints
 We reach the height of the spirit;
 In the company of the saints
 We enter the Lord's presence;
 In the company of the saints
 We acquire all the virtues;
 In the company of the saints
 We are aware only of God;

In the company of the saints

We are granted His Name, life's treasure;

Nanak is ever a sacrifice unto the living saints.⁷⁷

... ..

He who taketh refuge at the feet of the saints

Hath entered on the path of his salvation

But he, O Nanak, who vilifieth the saints

Falls, into an endless cycle of births.⁷⁸

The company of the holy people in the *Sadh-Sangat* resulted in manifold advantages to its members. It became the cardinal belief of the Sikhs both in the sixteenth and the centuries that followed. The influence of *Sadh Sangat* on one's individual personality is indeed very great. The sinner and wicked are transformed in the assembly of the holy or *Sadh Sangat*. Even before it had achieved its final form Guru Nanak had declared: "In the society of the holy, one becometh holy; And one runneth after virtue, forsaking his sins".⁷⁹ Since the divine music and the True Nam was sung in the *Sadh Sangat*, it changed the perverted mind into an abode of peace and contentment. Guru Amar Das in his composition says: "One sitteth in the Saint's holy society, and, through the True Nam, cometh the mind's peace."⁸⁰

The role of *Sadh-Sangat* in the Sikh way of life in the sixteenth century was indeed laudable.⁸¹ With Sikh *Sangat* passing through an evolution in the first half of the sixteenth century under the watchful eyes of Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das and Guru Ram Das and developing into *Sadh Sangat*, the Sikh society had found itself emerging on a pretty strong footing.⁸² The Sikh devotees attained the strength natural to those united under a bond. The *Sadh Sangat's* prime aim was to form a pure, pious and an integrated congregation under one roof.⁸³

The *Sadh-Sangat* was truly a revolutionary institution. It established one of the fundamentals of the social milieu of the sixteenth century when it removed from among those constituting the *Sadh Sangat* all the distinctions of caste, creed, sex and race. All were considered equal.

The idea of common brotherhood among the *Sadh Sangats* was further cemented by another institution. It was that of *langar*. 'This institution of *Guru Ka Langar*' or the free community kitchen was as old as Sikhism. It was started by Guru Nanak and continued by his successors.⁸⁴ It was also used as a powerful institution for the uplift of the downtrodden who had been groaning under the yoke of socio-economic-cum-political inequities and religious discriminations prevalent in the society at that time.⁸⁵ It is true that the idea of community kitchen existed during the ancient times and it was even practised then on some ceremonial occasions, but its real value was forgotten in the medieval times as both the idea and the practice of interdining was no longer in vogue. That was because the division of the society into various social orders had widened the gap of human brotherhood. Guru Nanak saw the harm caused by the division and demarcation of the society into various strata of social life. He started the *langar* as a crusade against social injustice, oppression and tyranny of the caste system. The ideals of love and service, fraternity and equality were taught and practised by the followers of the Guru while participating in the *langar*. Guru Nanak taught people that all men were the children of one God and, as such all were brothers. The Guru's *langar* was open to all and there food was served to all irrespective of caste or social status.⁸⁶ The institution of *Guru-ka-Langar* spread equality among all and helped to remove untouchability and other evils born of the caste system.⁸⁷ *Guru-ka-langar*, thus grew into an institution where lessons in social service and practical ethics were given and practised. It also helped the Sikhs in sublimating their personal ego for the service of mankind.⁸⁸ The concept of *Guru-ka-Langar* developed rapidly under the four successors

of Guru Nanak. By the end of the sixteenth century, it was accepted that all Sikhs would actively participate in the running of the common free kitchens opened at *Gurdwaras*.⁸⁹

Guru Nanak had given birth to this institution soon after his final *udasi* when he finally settled at Kartarpur. The full import of the institution of *langar* was far-reaching. It came to symbolize brotherhood, equality and humbleness. It came naturally to those who had accepted Guru Nanak's invitation and settled at Kartarpur. Each one of them had to engage himself in one task or another, such as drawing water from the well, grinding corn, collecting fuelwood, cooking food, distributing it, waving the fan over the assembly in refectory to alleviate the rigour of a hot summer's day, cleaning the dishes, and so on. "This common food was eaten by all inmates and visitors alike, sitting in the rows together, signifying surrender of caste scruples and affirming their new sense of community".⁹⁰ Guru Nanak himself, after the routine congregational prayer, sat with the *sangat* to take his meals in *langar*.

Guru Angad had not only continued with the institution on setting up the headquarters of the Guru at Khadur but added new dimensions to it. He spent all his earnings and worked hard to meet the expenses of the *langar* at Khadur.⁹¹ The devotees of the Guru who came to see him from the distant places were provided both shelter and free meals. "The daily routine in the Guru's *langar* was strictly followed at Khadur. At about nine O' clock, all visitors sat in a line to take the meals served to them in the *langar*. Guru Angad would start his religious instructions only after all had taken their meals in the *langar*. The service in the *langar* was not done by attendants belonging to select castes but by the Sikhs of the Guru."⁹²

The institution of *langar* became an integrated and regular feature of Sikhism during Guru Amar Das. He established a Sikh centre of learning at Goindwal where *langar* was served to the devotees who came to see the Guru. He made the *langar* compulsory to all the

visitors who came to see him. Khushwant Singh is right when he observes: "Guru Amar Das made the *langar* an integral institution of the Sikh Church by insisting that anyone who wanted to see him had first to accept his hospitality by eating with the disciples".⁹³ It is said that he insisted even on the Mughal Emperor, Akbar, when he came to see Guru Amar Das at Goindwal, to take meal in the *langar*. Akbar was so much impressed that he showed his desire to contribute to the success of the *langar* institution by making a grant of revenue free land to the Guru.⁹⁴ The Raja of Haripur, likewise, had to sit in the *langar*, and eat with others, before he could be admitted to the presence of the Guru.⁹⁵

Guru Ram Das did not confine the *langar* to the Guru's headquarters. Even after he had shifted the centre of Sikh activity from Goindwal to Amritsar, he saw that the *langar* continued at Goindwal with the same pattern as during his stay there. The *langar* at Amritsar was kept under his direct supervision throughout his stay. He revived the slacking interest in the *langars* at Kartarpur and Khadur. He insisted on his devotees to offer something in the service to the Guru in kind or cash to maintain the *langars*. The response of the devotees was great. The Sikh devotees rendered enthusiastic help by providing both money and free labour and that helped the Guru to make a big success of the *langar* at Amritsar.⁹⁶

Guru Arjan, like his predecessors, worked hard for the maintenance of *langar*. Under Guru Arjan the institution of *langar* blossomed into its fullest glory. The Sikh devotees considered it a part of their religious duty to serve in the *langar*. To enter into the *Gurdwara* and to return without eating *langar* was considered to be sinful. To work and to contribute for *Guru-ka-langar* became for them a sacred duty.⁹⁷

The *langar* becoming an essential feature of the Sikhism in the closing years of the sixteenth century posed the problem of finances which resulted in Guru Arjan laying the foundation of a new institution.

He appointed a few *masands* to collect money in well-defined areas on behalf of the Guru and laid the foundation of the *masand* system. "All Sikhs were asked to devote a tenth of their income (*dasvandh*) in the name of the Guru".⁹⁸ There was no forceful collection of money, it was all voluntary. Guru Arjan worked hard and with the help of the devotees started *langar* at the newly established Sikh centres at Tarn Taran, Kartarpur (in Jullundur Doab) and Hargobindpur. "Guru Arjan organised the system of contributions to the common pool by laying down that every Sikh should contribute one-tenth of his income for the common welfare. The money thus collected was to be spent for running the free kitchen".⁹⁹ The institution of *langar* towards the end of the sixteenth century became a well developed religious institution of the Sikhs based on the ethical code. Its extension to centres which did not happen to be the Guru's headquarters threw the responsibilities of maintaining it to the Sikhs. The institution of *langar* and its maintenance became the responsibility of the entire Sikh community.¹⁰⁰

The contribution of the institution of *langar* and *sangat* to the growth of Sikhism in the sixteenth century was great. They became two integrated constituents of the *Gurdwara* activities. Wherever the *sangat* was established it led to emergence of a *langar*. It integrated the emerging Sikh society into a common bond of harmony and eliminated the hampering influence of the caste system. The institution of *langar* developed the spirit of social welfare among the Sikhs. The Sikh Gurus in their compositions have referred to the importance of *Guru-ka-langar*. Guru Nanak in his composition says:

He alone, O Nanak, knoweth the way who earneth with the sweat of his brow and then shareth it with others.¹⁰¹

Guru Arjan in his composition dilates on the importance of *langar* in the following words:

Making an earnest effort, leave thou whole earning, abide thou in joy.

Contemplating the Lord, meet thou
Him, and Thy anxiety is dispelled.¹⁰²

One of the most important roles of the institution of *langar* during the sixteenth century, was that it broke the chains of caste system in Sikh organisation. The divisive forces of caste were weakened by this institution. Collective work and labour done for the *Guru-ka-langar* inducted the feeling of brotherhood among the Sikhs. The institution of *Guru-ka-langar* also evoked the love for labour.

Guru-ka-langar invoked pride among the Sikh devotees in the service done for others. Selfless service, *sewa* became a cardinal principle of the Sikhs. Its importance was first spelled out by the founder of Sikhism when he insisted that one should serve others ungrudgingly and with pleasure. His successors did the same. Guru Amar Das highlighted the importance of service (*sewa*) for the Sikhs when he further insisted that one should serve mankind in this world for a better life in the next.¹⁰³

Guru Angad followed his predecessor in underlining the importance of service for others by directing that it should be done voluntarily. In one of his compositions, he said: "Service done with compulsion is of no avail." To provide *langar* to the devotees became a matter of sacred duty for the Sikhs. The success of the *langar* in the sixteenth century in spite of great hardships and financial difficulties indicates the development of strong love for commonhood that was at the bottom of the *langar* system. Bhai Gurdas, a Sikh writer of sixteenth century, linked up the sharing one's food with others with service rendered to others. He did that in the following words:

The Sikhs should serve one another.

Only by serving others, one can attain happiness.

One should cultivate selfless devotion and share one's food with others.¹⁰⁴

In the middle of the sixteenth century the Sikh *sangats* spread far and wide. Likewise, the *langar*, too, continued at the different centres of Sikh preaching. Both as a cause and as an effect of the *sangat* and *langar*, the number of the Sikh devotees began to increase rapidly.

Notes and References

1. G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, pp. 30-31.
2. A.C. Das, *An Introduction to the Study of Society*, p. 35.
3. Dalbir Singh, *Studies in the Background of the Rise of Sikhism* (unpublished M. Litt. thesis submitted in the Department of Religious studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1976), p. 8.
4. It is generally believed that if Guru Nanak had not appointed his successor his religion would have been rendered into a sect like Kabirpanthis.
5. I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol.1, p. 225; W.H. McLeod, *The Evolution of the Sikh Community*, pp. 38-39.
6. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-25.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 223-24.
8. Bhai Gurdas, *Varan*, Var III, Pauri 18.
9. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 232 (see f.n. 5).
10. Sher Singh, *Philosophy of Sikhism*, p. 46; I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 223.
11. Sahib Singh (ed), *Stik Satta Balwand di var*, p. 78.
12. *Adi Granth*, p. 967; Teja Singh, *Sikhism; Its Ideals and Institutions*, p. 23.
13. *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, pp. 201-02; Kirpal Singh (ed), *Janam Sakhi Parampara*, pp. 162-63.
14. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 234.
15. Bhai Gurdas, *op. cit.*, Var I, Pauri 45, 48, Var XIII.
16. Bhai Gurdas, *op. cit.*, Var I, Pauri 45; as quoted by J.S.Grewal, *Guru Nanak in History*, p. 300.
17. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, Vol. II, pp. 253-55.
18. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 236.
19. Cf. Niharranjan Ray, *The Sikh Gurus and the Sikh Society*, pp. 62-63.
20. Teja Singh *op. cit.* p. 27.
21. Bhai Gurdas, *op. cit.* Var I , Pauri 22.

22. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
24. *Loc-cit.*
25. J.S.Grewal, *op. cit.*, p. 313.
26. *Adi Granth*, p. 20 (Sri Rag Mohala I).
27. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol I, 263. The learned scholar has written that 'spiritual aspect of Guru was becoming a symbol of material power'. We may say that during sixteenth century there was no such change. Guru's voice was said to be the voice of God. The Sikh Gurus in their compositions have referred to, many times, to 'Guru' as the 'servant of God.' God reveals the truth through Guru. He is the saviour of the world. He is free from *haumai* and ego, 'Guru is infinite'. Guru means God, the Holy Word or a spiritual personality who has become one with God--*Adi Granth*, pp, 463-64; also see, pp. 149, 1082, 1170, 1421.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 263. Here again, the learned scholar says: "This seems indirectly to indicate that the Sikhs had begun to regard their Guru not only as a spiritual but also as a temporal ruler". We may conclude here that the idea of temporal ruler did not arise altogether during sixteenth century; i.e. the period under study. Moreover, we did not get any reference to this concept neither in *Adi Granth*, nor in any other Sikh chronicle.
29. *Adi Granth*, p.102. '*Sumat pea Nam dhyae Gurmukh hoy mela jeo.*'
30. Surinder Singh Johar, *The Sikh Guru and their Shrines*, p. 13.
31. Duncan Greenless, *The Gospel of the Guru Granth Sahib*, p. CXIVII; Cf. Sher Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
32. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *The Quintessence of Sikhism*, p. 170.
33. As quoted by Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
34. *Adi Granth*, p. 444.
35. Bhai Kahan Singh, *Guru Shabad Ratnakar Mahan Kosh*, p. 415.
36. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. pp. 261-62.
37. *Hari-mandir* means the abode or temple of Hindu God Hari, but in Sikhism its connotation is different, here it means the abode or temple of the Ultimate or the Supreme Reality i.e. God.
38. In theological perspective *Gurdwara* is not an exact synonym of 'mandir' as no idol is placed in it. But in regard to religious sanctity it is a synonymous term for the Hindu *mandir* because both the places have a great reverence in their respective community.
39. *Adi Granth*, p. 1075.

40. *Ibid.*, pp 351, 354, 730, 922, 930, 933, 1015, and 1075.
41. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I p. 261.
42. Surinder Singh Johar, *op. cit.*, p 28.
43. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 261.
44. Surinder Singh Johar, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
45. *Loc. cit.*,
46. Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*, p. 1.
47. Profane is such a line which cut the sacred from unsacred and thus the threshold of the *Gurdwara* becomes a dividing line, which cuts the profane from the sacred.
48. G.C. Narang, *op. cit.*, p. 34. The author writes, "Guru Nanak himself had founded the village of Kartarpur where he built the first *Dharamsala*".
49. *Ibid.*, p. 34. According to *Meharban Janam Sakhi*, Guru Nanak laid the foundation of a *dharamsala* at the place of Raja Shivnabh, here, Guru Nanak instructed the people to hold assemblies and recite *kirtan*. It was the first *dharamsala*. The same *Janam Sakhi* refers to the demolition of the house of Sajjan Thag and establishment of *dharamsala*. It was the second *dharamsala*. See *Janam Sakhi Parampara (Meharban Janam Sakhi)*, pp. 162-63. But on the other hand *Vilayat Wali Janam Sakhi* refers to the establishment of first *dharamsala* at the place of Sajjan Thag, then follows *dharamsala* at Kartarpur. See *Janam Sakhi Parampara (Vilayat Wali Janam Sakhi)* p. 13, *Puratan Janam Sakhi*, also adds that the first *dharamsala* was built at the place of Sajjan Thag.
50. *Meharban Janam Sakhi*, p. 238, *Vilayat Wali Janam Sakhi*, p.13.
51. Taran Singh, *Guru Angad Dev Ji (Pbi.)* pp. 7-8.
52. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 54; Cf. G.C. Narang, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 55; Cf. G.C. Narang, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
54. Cf. Sarup Das Bhalla, *Mehma Prakash* (Bhag-II), pp. 347-49; Bhai Santokh Singh, *Gur Pariap Suraj Granth*, pp. 1108, 1888, 1891, 1918; Kahan Singh, *Mahan Kosh*, pp. 226, 367, 433; Khan Mohammad Waliullah Khan, *Sikh Shrines in West Pakisthan*, p. 31.
55. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 23; Bhai Gurdas, *op. cit.* Var. I, Pauri 42-43.
56. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
57. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
58. Cf. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 256.

59. *Adi Granth*, p. 72.
60. Sudharshan Singh, *Sikh Religion; Democratic Ideals and Institution*, p. 59.
61. *Adi Granth* p. 586.
62. Word here means Guru's holy word and "Holy Fellowship" means *sangat*.
63. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
64. Cf. *Parchian Sewa Das* (ed.) Bhasha Vibhag, Patiala, 1962. It is a misfit title to call the work of Bhai Sewa Das as *Parchian Sewa Das* rather the work should be entitled *Parchian Satigura Dian* written by Bhai Sewa Das, pp. 51-52. The *Janam Sakhi* literature and *Parchian Sewa Das*, written by Bhai Sewa Das, refer to the establishment of the *sangat* by Guru Nanak.
65. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, pp 37-38.
66. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. II, p. 15.
67. Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Vol. V. pp. 1345-62.
68. *Adi Granth*, pp. 243, 1243.
69. G.C. Narang, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
70. Santokh Singh, *Suraj Prakash*, Vol. V, pp. 1621-1700; Sudarshan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
71. Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, p. 389.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 388.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 389.
74. Cf. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 62.
75. *Adi Granth*, p. 587 Var Wadhans, M. 4.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 43 Sri Rag M. 5.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 371 (*Astapadi* 7; Pauri 4 *Sukhmani*).
78. *Ibid.*, p. 371 (*Astapadi* 13, *Slok* I).
79. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
81. Prakash Singh, *The Sikh Gurus and the Temple of Bread*, p. 18.
82. It is said that when a Sikh enters the congregation or assembly of the devotees in a *Gurdwara*, he becomes a '*Sadh*' i.e. a pious man, and his association with the congregation in a *Gurdwara* becomes *Sadh Sangat* i.e. association of the pious or holy-assembly. Moreover, it is a Sikh belief, as told by the Gurus, that the spirit of Guru lies in the congregation or the assembly of the devotees in a *Gurdwara*, hence it was called '*Sat*

Sangat' or assembly of the holy. Thus *Sadh Sangat, Sat Sangat, Sikh Sangat* all means the holy assembly or the holy congregation in a *Gurdwara*.

83. Prakash Singh, *op. cit.* p. 18.
84. *Ibid.* p. 35.
85. Sudarshan Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 87; Surinder Singh, Kohli, *Outlines of Sikh Thought*, p. 166.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 87; I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 270; Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
87. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
88. Sudarshan Singh *op. cit.*, p. 87.
89. Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
90. Harbans Singh, *Guru Nanak and the Origins of the Sikh Faith*, p. 180.
91. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 50.
92. Sudarshan Singh, *op. cit.*, p.96; Teja Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 112, Prakash Singh, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
93. Khushwant Singh *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 52.
94. *Ibid.*, Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, p. 336.
95. Gobind Singh Mansukhani, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.
96. M.A. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 271.
97. Fauja Singh, *et. al.*, *Sikhism*, p. 8.
98. Khushwant Singh, *op. cit.*, Vol.I, p.57; I.B.Banerjee, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 254.
99. Sudarshan Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.
100. I.B. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 255.
101. *Adi Granth.*, p. 1245 (*Var Sarang, Mohalla 1*).
102. *Ibid.*, p. 522 (*Var Gujri, Mohalla 2*).
103. *Ibid.*, p. 787 (*Var Suhi, Mohalla 3*).
104. Bhai Gurdas, *op. cit.*, Var 20, Pauri 10.

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